THE Nation

VOLUME 149 NEW YORK · SATURDAY · NOVEMBER 11, 1939 NUMBER 20

The Shape of Things

THE ONE INDUSTRY FOR WHICH REPEAL OF the embargo provides an immediate boost is aircraft production. With the signing of the bill, orders amounting to $170,000,000 were released, and this figure will probably be brought up to $500,000,000 shortly. Taking into account the enlarged requirements of our own army and the needs of neutral countries, it is certain that the present productive capacity of the industry will prove inadequate. A program of plant extension will, of course, mean more work for builders and machine-tool makers. Apart from planes, the Allies are likely to place orders for small arms, explosives, and fire-control instruments. However, the resources of the Allies in this country, although large, are not unlimited, and with credits barred they will only buy here what they cannot readily obtain elsewhere. At the same time, since they will continue to restrict purchases of non-essentials, improved business for armaments will to some extent be offset by a loss of trade in other directions. The chief immediate sufferer from the Neutrality Act, however, is the shipping industry. Eight regular foreign trade routes will be closed down, involving ninety-two vessels hitherto earning a gross revenue of over $50,000,000. Some of these ships may be diverted to Latin American routes, but it is said that, at present, there is not nearly enough traffic available to employ them all. It is possible that some British shipping now engaged in inter-American trade may be employed on North Atlantic routes; in which case an opportunity would arise for idle American tonnage. The chief difficulty of the shipping companies will be keeping their passenger liners in commission. There should, however, be a real chance to develop tourist trade to the south, and tourist dollars spent in Latin American countries would improve their exchange position and thus promote an increase in our exports.

*

THE MARGIN OF THE PRESIDENT'S VICTORY on the neutrality bill came as a surprise even to the most loyal Administration supporters. A sixty-two-vote majority in the House for repeal of the arms embargo was particularly remarkable in view of the fact that this same body wrote the embargo into the bill last July, against the Administration's wishes, by some forty-two votes. Much has happened since July to account for this striking reversal. But it is a sad commentary on human foresight to reflect that the primary argument for repeal last summer—the possibility of preventing war by a forthright warning to Hitler—no longer existed. The turnover of fifty votes may be attributed in part at least to the lure of prospective profits. But perhaps it is not wise to look at a gift horse too closely. Belated though it may be, a long step has been taken toward a realistic peace policy. The United States has taken a stand which, though technically neutral, is actually against Hitler. We are in less danger of being drawn into the war through such frank economic assistance to the Allies than if the embargo had been retained. Nevertheless, some curb on war profiteering is imperative if the country is to retain its sanity through the difficult months that lie ahead.

*

WE HAVE NEVER BEEN AMONG THOSE WHO assumed that Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh's extensive travels qualified him as a statesman. Neither have we taken it for granted, on the other hand, that his cordial relations with Marshal Göring made him a Nazi or that his speeches on behalf of the arms embargo made him anything but an astonishingly naive isolationist. But now we begin to have doubts about the Colonel's harmlessness. In a groping and vaporous essay appearing in the current *Reader's Digest,* called Aviation, Geography, and Race, the literary eagle gives an alarming demonstration of race monomania. His fight for American isolation, it appears, is based on an intense desire to force an immediate peace, and this in turn rests on a conviction that unless England, France, Germany, and the United States settle their quarrels and consolidate their ranks, something called the "white race" is doomed. Even now, "while we stand poised for battle, Oriental guns are turning westward, Asia presses toward us on the Russian border, all foreign races stir restlessly. It is time to turn from our quarrels and to build our white ramparts again." All the old nonsense is here—Gobineau, Stewart Chamberlain, Rosenberg—wrapped into a small, shapeless package: the struggle of the "white race to live at all in a pressing sea of yellow, black, and brown . . . time to guard our heritage from Mongol and Persian

Published weekly and copyright, 1939, in the U. S. A. by The Nation, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter, December 13, 1897, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1897.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and Moor . . . a Western Wall of race and arms which can hold back either a Genghis Khan or the infiltration of inferior blood . . . guard ourselves against attack by foreign armies and dilution by foreign races." Colonel Lindbergh is not a demagogue; he may be that far greater menace, an intensely sincere, humorless man with a marked neurosis and a wide potential following.

*

THE GHASTLY HORRORS OF THE GERMAN concentration camps, related in the new British White Paper, cannot, unhappily, be written off as baseless wartime propaganda. Incredible as the facts may seem, they have been confirmed all too amply by other sources. Heaven knows cruelty is a vice from which no nation is wholly free; brutes in authority are brutal everywhere. But in Germany under the Nazis sadism has been encouraged as a consistent and official policy in a way almost unparalleled in history. It is, indeed, difficult not to agree with the British consul general at Frankfort who wrote after the 1938 pogroms that the only possible explanation seemed to be "mass sexual perversity." In releasing the documents in the White Paper for publication the British government stated that it had hitherto refrained from making them public because so long as there was any prospect of reaching a settlement with Germany it would have been wrong to embitter relations between the two countries. Even after the outbreak of war, it hesitated because it did not want to promote hatred, and action has now been taken only because of "the unscrupulous propaganda" spread by the Nazis. This appears to be additional evidence that Britain is neither expecting nor seeking any compromise with Hitlerism. But if there is now recognition of the pathological abnormality of the Nazi system it certainly comes rather late in the day. With documents of this kind in its archives, how was it possible for the British government to maintain for so long that there was nothing in the nature of the Hitler regime which precluded a deal, or even friendship, between the two countries?

*

THERE IS ANOTHER TERROR GOING ON IN Europe which has been forgotten in the spate of war news. In Spain Franco's vengeance on the Republicans has not yet been satisfied, and although there have been reports of an amnesty for some political offenders, the executioners are still busy. In the city of Gijon the Nationalist paper *El Commercio* published lists of men executed almost daily between August 18 and 27. The total in this short period in one small town was no less than 186. Lists of men and women "wanted" for the crime of loyalty are a constant feature in the Spanish press, and anyone who knows of their whereabouts is invited to denounce them and so earn the favor of the authorities. November 1 was named as a deadline for all Spaniards who had belonged to the Republican army to present themselves before the courts and prove that their service was involuntary. We have no doubt that the British government has information about the Spanish terror, but it chooses to turn a blind eye. So does our own government, intent upon reestablishing a market for American goods in Spain. Most astonishing of all is the attitude of the French toward the thousands of refugees still herded in concentration camps near the Spanish border. The able-bodied veterans of the Loyalist army are only too anxious to offer their services to France in fighting lines, fields, or factories. Some of them have been put to work under armed guards and in wretched conditions. But the French government seems mainly anxious to persuade or force the refugees to return to Spain in accordance with the demands of Franco. In view of the shortage of man-power in France, the French attitude toward political exiles in general is inexplicable. Germans and Italians who are known anti-fascists, and even Poles, are being victimized; in many cases they have been interned or jailed.

*

WHEN MOLOTOV REFERRED TO OUR POLICY toward Cuba he was throwing brickbats from the glass house of Russia's cunning new form of "non-aggression." But some of the self-righteous comments evoked in this country were as disingenuous as Moscow's own apologetics for "mutually assisting" Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. If the Kremlin has been less than candid in explaining its enlarged—shall we say?—"sphere of influence," our own press has been equally so in patting the United States on the back about Cuban "independence." Cuba will remain "independent" only so long as it agrees to pay the Chase Bank loans to Machado and does not become too democratic. "Cuba," the New York *Times* said in a lecture to Molotov, "has been wholly free and independent for more than five years." The statement will earn the *Times* an undeserved reputation for humor in Latin America. Cuba during the last five years has been "free and independent" under a military dictatorship put into power and kept there by an alliance of our State Department, Wall Street, and reactionary Cuban politicians. The democratic Grau government was overthrown as a result of our refusal to recognize it, and the chief objection to Grau was his refusal to pay the Chase loans, whose corrupt and unconstitutional character was exposed by the Pecora investigation. Despite the New Deal's good-neighbor policy and "truth in securities," its SEC capped the Welles-Chase Bank campaign with success last year by permitting an unrepresentative Cuban government to refinance the old loans, most of them at 110 cents on the dollar. Cubans are paying heavy consumption and transportation taxes to service these Chase loans, and will continue to do so at the risk of losing their "independence."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE CRISIS IN INDIA WAS NOT RESOLVED this past week despite conferences between the Viceroy, Mohandas K. Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad, president of the National Congress, and M. A. Jinnah, president of the Moslem League. Five of the eleven provincial ministries have resigned in protest against Britain's failure to define India's permanent status at this time. In each case the resignation was preceded by action in the provincial assemblies disapproving the Viceroy's recent declaration of Indian policy. The Viceroy now announces that since the conferences have failed he has no choice but to use the emergency powers in the India act. The British government seems determined to follow a naked and stupid imperialist policy. This was foreshadowed in the belligerent declaration, before the House of Lords, of the Marquess of Zetland, Secretary of State for India, that the British might soon take over administration of the provinces in which the ministries have resigned. A week earlier an appeal by Wedgewood Benn, Secretary of State for India in the last Labor Cabinet, that India be given some assurance that the cause for which it is asked to fight—that of freedom—is also its cause was rejected by Sir Samuel Hoare. The Lord Privy Seal declared that if the Congress Party resorted to non-cooperation, British rule would be maintained "with efficiency, strength, and justice." Unless the Chamberlain government undergoes a change of heart, Britain has slight chance of winning India's support in the war.

*

FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN JAPAN and the United States in settlement of American claims have been blocked by another shift in Japanese policy. Since the signing of the Nazi-Soviet pact a sharp struggle has obviously been under way in Japan between the moderate elements, who desire to patch up relations with the West, and the militarists, who prefer to maintain Japan's link with the totalitarian powers. Although the advantage at the moment seems to rest with the former group, the military have succeeded in vetoing all concessions pending the formal launching of the Wang Ching-wei puppet government at Nanking. Ambassador Grew had a preliminary conversation with Foreign Minister Nomura last week at which America's grievances against Japan were aired in some detail. This time the Ambassador seems to have been somewhat less frank than in his recent Tokyo speech, for the State Department has declared that there was no mention of a possible embargo. Unofficial circles in Japan indicate a readiness to settle outstanding American claims resulting from Japanese operations in China. But somehow the Japanese should be made to realize that the demand for an embargo has not arisen primarily because of these claims but is the outgrowth of Japan's invasion of a country to which we have treaty commitments.

IF THE NLRB ORDER AGAINST WESTERN Union is upheld in the courts, it will provide a new and potent deterrent to the formation of company unions. The Labor Board declared the Association of Western Union Employees to be an organization under company control, and instructed Western Union to repay more than $500,000 in dues collected by the association since July 5, 1935, the day on which the Wagner act became effective. Counsel for Western Union calls the decision "biased and vicious" and will appeal. But what seems vicious to us is the practice of herding employees into a union they don't want and making them help to pay for its upkeep. Western Union's labor record, if the board's decision is correct, has been no shining example. The association now declared a company union was formed in 1918, according to the board, shortly after Western Union had refused to comply with recommendations of the National War Labor Board which asked the company to reinstate employees discharged for union membership. All the War Labor Board could do was to inflict a public slap on the wrist. The NLRB has a weapon that may make other employers pause before embarking on experiments in "independent" unionism.

Communist Imperialism

AS WE write, negotiations between the Soviet government and the Finnish delegation have been resumed, and there are reports that the Finns are more hopeful of a satisfactory settlement. This should not be impossible provided that Russia does not insist on pressing its demands to the point where Finnish integrity would be destroyed. The Finns realize that, in the event of a Russian invasion, they could depend on little more than moral support from any other country, and they are prepared to make sacrifices within reason. Unfortunately, the bullying tone of the Moscow press suggests that the spirit of compromise is not very strong on the other side.

The demands which Russia is making were broadcast to the world by Molotov in his speech to the Supreme Soviet, but the counter-proposals of the Finnish government have not been published. The main stumbling-block, however, appears to be Soviet insistence on the lease of a naval base at Hangoe near the entrance to the Gulf of Finland. This, it is declared, is necessary for the defense of Leningrad although, with the newly obtained bases in the Baltic states and the islands in the gulf which Finland apparently is willing to cede, the security of that city cannot very easily be threatened. Hence the belief that Russia wants Hangoe as a jumping-off place for offensive purposes in the western Baltic and as a means of maintaining a hold on Finland are not unjustified. Nor can Finland be blamed for thinking that such a concession would invite violation of its

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

neutrality by any power which became involved in war with Russia, in addition to undermining its independence through the pressure which could be exerted by a foreign force occupying a part of its territory.

It is true that the Soviets have offered concessions in return, but they hardly measure up their demands. The strips of territory in Eastern Karelia which they propose to cede have a sentimental interest for Finland, but strategically they provide no additional security. The withdrawal of opposition to fortification of the Aaland Islands appears at first sight to be of greater importance, but the fact is that Russian control of Hangoe would destroy to a great extent the defensive value of that archipelago. Nor is the proposal to demilitarize part of the Finnish-Russian border very impressive. It is as if the wolf said to the sheep: Why should we let a fence separate us when we have agreed not to bite each other?

Whatever the outcome of the present negotiations, the methods by which Russia has conducted them tend to confirm the belief that a new form of communist imperialism is emerging. Recent articles in *Pravda* read almost like parodies of the *Völkischer Beobachter* in the crude violence of their threats. A speech by the Finnish Foreign Minister Eljas Erkko, which stated in extremely moderate tones that Finland was prepared to make concessions contributing to the security of Leningrad but determined to resist aggression, was reported under the headline: "Foreign Minister of Finland Incites to War Against the U. S. S. R." There followed an account of the speech attributing to Mr. Erkko statements which nowhere appear in the Finnish report, and on this basis Finland was accused of imitating the provocative (*sic*) attitude of Poland last spring and warned that it might incur a similar fate.

Several readers of *The Nation* have written protesting against our recent criticisms of Soviet Russia and particularly resenting suggestions that Stalin was adopting an imperialistic policy. Such critic ought to read the article quoted above, substituting Britain for the Soviet Union, London for Leningrad, Holland for Finland, and so on. Typical passages would then appear as follows: "A glance at a map of the North Sea reveals that the question of the safety of Britain is particularly acute along the Dutch coast. Britain not only has the right but is obliged to take measures to guarantee the safety of the land and sea approaches to London, whose population is equal to that of Holland. . . . Certain influences in the east oppose a guaranty of safety for Britain in the North Sea. Well, what about us British people? . . . Our answer is simple and clear. We shall chuck to the devil any game of political card players and go our way despite everything. We shall secure the safety of Britain . . . by breaking down all and every kind of obstacle in the path of this goal."

If the London *Times* used language such as this to demand control of Rotterdam in order to safeguard British security, neither *The Nation* nor its critics would hesitate to condemn it. Yet there really is a present danger to London owing to the possibility of German invasion of Holland, while Russia is on terms ostensibly of warm friendship with the only power which could threaten it through Finland. The fact is that security can always be adduced as an excuse for imperialist adventures. Japan seized Manchuria in self-protection and then to make that safe went on to take North China. Hence the Scandinavian states can hardly be blamed for fearing that if Russia gets Hangoe it will soon seek another strong point further west in order to cover its new outpost.

"Upon What Meat...?"

MARTIN DIES is making progress. He goes from one triumph to another. He soon made himself the Republican Party's favorite Democrat. Industry acknowledges his help in smearing some of our most militant unions. He hopes now to turn his talents against consumer organizations. The idea seems to have come to him all of a heap. He was invited to speak at the convention in New York City of the Associated Grocery Manufacturers of America, but the speech somehow failed to click. Although the bustle is coming back via Mainbocher, it is a little late in the day to do imitations of William Jennings Bryan. Dies spoke highly—and lengthily—of God, and wrastled lustily with the Muscovite devil; everybody applauded, though afterward there were snickers in the lobby. But when the reporters crowded around, Dies hit pay dirt. He declared that he was going to investigate "research organizations identified with the consumer movement"—and investigate them, of course, for C———t influences. This gave the press a fresh "angle" on the story, and fitted in with the plans of the association, which devoted one session of its convention to consumer organizations. In fairness to the association it must be said that its own resolution on consumer organizations did not raise the red bogy, but attacked "insincere" groups which "disseminate false or misleading information."

But whether or not the Dies suggestion is kindly received by the grocery men, it has possibilities. Dies is far more optimistic even than Browder about the wide influence the Communist Party exerts, and if he once puts his mind to it he can find reds anywhere along the political spectrum. The technique that was used against Murphy and is used against labor unions can be applied to other groups as well. It may soon be evidence of "red" activity or "fellow-traveling"—dread disease—to question the efficacy of Glutz's Wonder Salts. There is no reason why Dies cannot peddle his wares in the same way to other

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

industries. How useful it would be to the utilities to have Dies discover that efforts to obtain lower electric or gas rates was the result of communistic boring from within in our regulatory commissions! Or that the attempt to cut rates was a Moscow plot to undermine the American way by reducing the profits of the power trust. The great oil monopolists are worried about the onslaught being made upon them in some parts of the country by spokesmen for the independents and the motorists. What if Dies "investigated"? He can always be depended on to find a red. The Texan feels about reds as Voltaire did about God; if there are none, he digs up a mailing list.

Dies claims to be against "all isms," but his widening activities strikingly resemble at least one ism. Hitler panhandled his way to power in Germany by currying favor with—and collecting contributions from—one special interest after another by attacking its pet enemies as "reds." The 1936 campaign here showed the technique in use on a wide scale. Fortunately it failed. It may fail again. The attack made on Dies by Wendell L. Willkie, of Commonwealth and Southern, for "undermining democratic procedure," like the widespread denunciation of Dies for publishing the mailing list of the League for Peace and Democracy in Washington, may indicate a turn in the popular attitude toward the activities of Dies. Just as German experience has shown that the knife of fascism is double edged, so Willkie knows that business, as well as the left, has an interest in establishing safeguards against "investigation" of the Dies variety.

No Boundaries

THE award of the Nobel Prize in physiological medicine to Dr. Domagk, director of the I. G. Farbenindustrie laboratory in Elberfeld, Germany, for his discovery of the therapeutic power of sulfanilamide is a happy reminder that science acknowledges no national boundaries. The recognition of Dr. Domagk's achievement has been world-wide; there could have been no reason other than a political one for withholding the award. In making it, the Swedish Nobel Prize Committee completely disregarded Hitler's announcement that German scientists would not be allowed to accept Nobel prizes, and Dr. Domagk has regretfully declined the prize. But the award stands, and in the present wave of nationalism and anti-German—in extension of anti-Nazi—feeling, the choice is a particularly happy one.

As for the discovery itself, the actual therapeutic value of sulfanilamide is less important than the new trend of thought it has brought with it. In bacteriological research the technique invented by Ehrlich and developed by a thousand laboratory workers has been to find some chemical agent which would kill bacteria in a test-tube and then to see whether the human organism could tolerate it. Previously known bactericides that are tolerated by the body are much less active against the bacteria in the body than in the test-tube. In the case of sulfanilamide, the reverse is true—it is not nearly so effective as a bactericide in the test-tube as it is in the body. This fact will inevitably stimulate a search for other therapeutically active chemicals which may have been overlooked in the past on account of their feeble action in the test-tube.

Although the current award is well deserved, the Nobel Prize, as an institution, has not been an unmixed blessing. There has been a tendency for scientific men in positions of influence, with the prize in view, to gather around them, through financial or political pull, juniors of superior caliber, and thus acquire reputations wholly incommensurate with their personal ability. With the increased overlapping among the basic sciences, and with the lack of generalizations to pull together the various categories of scientific knowledge, most pieces of research today are joint undertakings. The nominating committees would render service to science as well as justice to individual scientists if they were to include the names of the coworkers.

Anniversaries

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

BEGINNINGS are exciting, and anniversaries were invented, I suspect, to give us an excuse to recall the events they celebrate. Otherwise, they would be little more than empty rituals in honor of an ancient superstition—an obeisance to the magic of numbers.

Last week our contemporary the *New Republic* marked the twenty-fifth year of its existence by issuing an impressive anniversary number, bringing together a collection of articles by many of its ablest contributors on subjects related to a central theme, The Promise of American Life. The theme itself has reminiscent value for an old *New Republic* reader; it was the title of the most important book written by the journal's first editor, Herbert Croly. But the issue is sternly contemporary, even anticipatory. It says no word about the journal's past or the development of American life in the war and post-war years that coincide with the *New Republic's* own life span. I should have liked a discussion of the role of liberal journalism in these years of our generation. The nearest thing to such a stock-taking is an article, Looking Backward, by Charles A. Beard, in which the author uses the Progressive Party platform of 1912 as a touchstone of progress—with illuminating effect. But if the *New Republic* modestly refrains from editorial mention of its own life and times, the omission may itself serve as a reminder of the journal's role: it has always given its

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

energies to the present and future, and this issue is a monument to that tradition.

Perhaps I should add the note of reminiscence that the *New Republic's* editors have left unsounded. I easily recall the excitement with which young people in 1914 greeted the first issue of the new journal. The war in Europe had roused even the dullest to a painful awareness of the actual world. The first two books of Walter Lippmann had opened pathways for intellectual exploration which most of our college texts had buried in dust and dead leaves. Those few favored ones who, like myself, had sat in the Columbia classrooms of James Harvey Robinson and Charles Beard and James Shotwell had been bred in a stimulating atmosphere of realistic, even harsh and irreverent, political thinking and were more than ready for the weekly stimulus promised by the *New Republic*.

I recall, too, a Saturday soon after the *New Republic* first appeared when I went to the Yale-Harvard game at New Haven with two friends and Walter Lippmann, whom I had never before met. The game was important to a college junior, but it was overshadowed by the major sport of the afternoon—a rapid canvass of the newsstands of New Haven to discover how many carried the new-born *New Republic* and how well it was displayed.

Nineteen fourteen was also the year of Barnard's twenty-fifth anniversary, which means, by the inexorable laws of numbers, that the college is now celebrating its fiftieth. It is not hard to put the two together in one editorial column because the Barnard of twenty-five years ago is closely linked in my mind with the birth of the *New Republic*. In 1914 Barnard celebrated its birthday by an imposing public dinner at which I modestly represented the undergraduates. The other speakers, apart from university officials, were mostly women of considerable eminence, among them the novelist Alice Duer Miller, who, with Susan Myers, is the author of an anniversary volume just printed.* I devoted my own rather tremulous remarks, I remember, to the admirable absence at Barnard of the traditional sort of "college spirit." We had developed, I insisted, a new sort, a spirit which was tuned to the pressing claims of our time and our society. The labor movement and the march of reform in Washington, the drama of rising skyscrapers and "modern" art, the thunder of war on the Continent and its threat to our nation—these were among our chief concerns, I believed, and the fountain-head of our spirit. My words may have sounded both young and pretentious, but they sprang from the influence in our college community of such teachers as I have named above, and in the community at large of the men who had just founded the *New Republic*.

* "Barnard College: The First Fifty Years." Columbia University Press. $2.

Now Barnard is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary with another dinner and is looking back on a second twenty-five years of swift growth. But it can still recall its beginnings. They have been described in a lively volume* by Annie Nathan Meyer, who has served as a trustee since the college was founded. One important item in that book holds special interest for *The Nation* and its readers. It is a long letter by Mrs. Meyer ably pleading the need of a women's college in New York and recounting the discouraging struggles of the few men and women who were trying to meet that need. The letter opened the public campaign for the founding of the college, and it appeared in *The Nation* on January 26, 1888.

It is pleasant to know that *The Nation* had a modest hand in Barnard's beginnings; and it is interesting to note that in the year when the college was finally born, *The Nation* was about to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary and today is looking ahead to the imminent approach of its seventy-fifth.

* "Barnard Beginnings." Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.

CONTENTS

THE SHAPE OF THINGS	509
EDITORIALS:	
COMMUNIST IMPERIALISM	511
"UPON WHAT MEAT . . . . ?"	511
NO BOUNDARIES	513
ANNIVERSARIES by Freda Kirchwey	513
THE ARMY "TALKS" TO LEWIS AND GREEN by Robert Bendiner	515
NIGHT FALLS IN BERLIN by Toni Christen	517
ON BRITAIN'S LEFT AND RIGHT by Harold J. Laski	520
PROPAGANDA'S GOLDEN AGE. II. by Max Lerner	522
EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS by Keith Hutchison	524
IN THE WIND	525
ISSUES AND MEN by Oswald Garrison Villard	526
BOOKS AND THE ARTS:	
HAVE WE AN AMERICAN ART? by Constance Rourke	527
LOBBIES AND LAWMAKERS by Eliot Janeway	529
PATROON SCHUYLER'S SON-IN-LAW by I. F. Stone	530
THE CHINA WAR by Maxwell S. Stewart	531
ARTISTS OF SCIENCE by Hugh H. Darby	531
RECENT FICTION by Louis B. Salomon	532
DRAMA NOTE by Joseph Wood Krutch	533
FILMS by Franz Hoellering	533
RECORDS by B. H. Haggin	534

Editor and Publisher
FREDA KIRCHWEY

Managing Editor ROBERT BENDINER — *Literary Editor* MARGARET MARSHALL

Associate Editors
KEITH HUTCHISON MAXWELL S. STEWART I. F. STONE

Assistant Editor
JAMES WECHSLER

Dramatic Critic
JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

*

Business Manager and Director of Circulation
HUGO VAN ARX

Advertising Manager
MURIEL GRAY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Army "Talks" to Lewis and Green

BY ROBERT BENDINER

Washington, October 29

SUDDENLY and with considerable secrecy American trade unionism finds itself confronting a Hobson's choice between what amounts to at least temporary self-extinction, should this country go to war, and the risk of forcible extinction at the hands of a war-time government. The first alternative, in fact, is reliably reported to have been already accepted in principle by Colonel John P. Frey on behalf of the A. F. of L. and is now being considered by the C. I. O. as a basis for further discussion. At last month's conventions of the two great trade-union bodies labor's attitude toward war found resounding expression in resolutions and speeches—no war is good for labor; let's keep out at all costs. But while these inevitable sentiments found their way into the minutes, the chiefs and their lieutenants battled in closed session—at least the C. I. O. leaders battled—over specific and Draconian M-Day plans which were confidentially submitted to them by liaison officers attached to the staff of Assistant Secretary of War Louis Johnson.

Mobilization Day blueprints are always subject to change and always open to skepticism. Their exact nature depends on the military state of affairs at the moment a country enters a war. Should this country go in under circumstances not too different from those obtaining now, it is distinctly possible that our role would be that of a gigantic workshop and supply house for the Allies, a transporter of ships, guns, planes, and food, in a program of No-Cash-and-We-Carry. In that case only sections of the standing army, navy, and air corps would be sent abroad by way of man-power, and the complexion of industrial-mobilization plans would be considerably altered as to draft provisions, censorship, and the like. What would be least altered under these or, in fact, any circumstances is the schedule of events as they relate to labor and industry. Whatever the Allied powers need from us in the way of fighting forces, they are sure to want the products of our factories and to want them on a scale hitherto undreamed of. The War Department is getting ready for that contingency, and its proposals to John L. Lewis and William Green show that it has not the least intention of encumbering itself with such excess baggage as the niceties of collective bargaining.

In the M-Day preview now showing before an exclusive audience of trade-union executives, the program for labor is reliably held to look something like this: First an emergency period will be proclaimed, even before the declaration of war, during which the President will suspend the provisions of the Walsh-Healy act, which requires the maintenance of specific labor standards in the manufacture of products bought by the federal government. During this period, and subsequently, the Employment Service, now removed from the jurisdiction of the Labor Department and placed under the supervision of Paul V. McNutt, will become a key agency, geared to distribute and furnish adequate supplies of skilled labor to all the war industries and to prevent its diversion into the armed forces.

Once the war is declared, the President will invoke his war "emergency powers." These are practically boundless, and if there are any limits nobody can say what they are. It may be significant that Attorney General Murphy has already been asked by the Senate to indicate their lawful scope, and even more significant that he replied simply that he could not answer the question. As a matter of fact these powers have never been defined by the courts, and according to Leo M. Cherne, whose detailed outline* of M-Day plans had the indorsement of the Assistant Secretary of War, "the war-time powers of the President as exercised by Woodrow Wilson during the World War would have been ample to insure the immediate and complete application of the industrial-mobilization plan in all of its details without a single enactment of Congress, if this were considered desirable in an emergency."

Nevertheless, certain "restrictive legislation" will be in order, and under the pressure and hysteria of the day it is unlikely that Congress will bat an eyelash at speeding it through. At the request of the War Department an omnibus program will be presented which will include, first and foremost, a revival of the notorious May bill. This alone would give the President sweepingly dictatorial power to draft civilians for labor as well as for military duties, fix prices and wages, control industry through a system of licensing and priority regulations, and in fact do everything necessary to a dictatorship except what the bill was ostensibly drawn to do, namely, "prevent profiteering in time of war." All provisions of the Walsh-Healy act relating to wages and hours and to child labor will be repealed (only safety and health provisions will be retained), and the National Labor Relations Act will be amended to make possible a system of what will amount to compulsory arbitration. Strikes and

* "Adjusting Your Business to War," published by the Tax Research Institute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lockouts will be forbidden prior to the lapse of a "reasonable time." As Mr. Cherne's publishers put it:

> The enactment of the National Labor Relations Act and the entire problem of collective bargaining will unquestionably present one of the more ticklish labor problems to the War Labor Administration during the war. As can readily be understood, the right to strike will become a burdensome one to the instrumentalities of national defense when it is exercised in industries which are producing the needs of the armed forces. It is not probable that the right to strike will be completely terminated, nor is it probable that the ease with which it can be asserted under the NLRA will be continued. The great probability lies in the adoption of machinery similar to that now used in the railroad industry calling for mediation, conciliation, substantial notice, and lapse of time before strike, and similar controls which will assure continued production without termination of labor's rights of self-representation or collective bargaining.

The advance-notice requirement with regard to strikes is a tried and effective device and will allow labor to sit down at the collective-bargaining table only after its hands have been securely tied. Before it can act, the mediation machinery will be set in motion. As far as can be learned, the proposals communicated to organized labor by the army chiefs are even less conciliatory with regard to arbitration than the Cherne version, which is based on the 1936 industrial-mobilization plans, with revisions down to June of this year. Unlike the War Labor Board of World War days, the new agency will have statutory authority and its mediation decisions will be legally binding. Whatever the language of the law, the right to strike will become a pre-war memory.

Execution of the entire plan will be placed in the hands of a War Resources Administration, which will wherever necessary supersede the authority of the old-line departments and agencies. Coordinated with this administration will be a War Labor Board, whose chief, happily enough, is to have the "confidence of all groups." It will be a sad day for labor if that "confidence" is misplaced because labor will have no representative of its own choosing on the board. Aside from its head, the board is to have one deputy "satisfactory" to labor (find one who will be at once satisfactory to the C. I. O., the A. F. of L., and the Brotherhoods) and one "satisfactory" to industry, but in any case the "labor" man is all but certain to hold a minority vote. Representatives of each of the major labor groups will have seats in an Advisory Council, but since the council can be convoked only by the Resources Administration and ignored at will, its advice may as well be tendered to the Weather Bureau. In general what is expected of labor is a "Gompers agreement"—consent to preserve the status quo, with wages and hours, working conditions, and union organization to be frozen "for the duration" except in so far as the Administration will take "real wages" into account.

Offhand one would not think that there was any basis here for serious discussion by men who have brought American trade unionism to the peak of its power. At least three members of the C. I. O.'s executive board did in fact protest vehemently in a stormy closed session at San Francisco against the consideration of such proposals even as a basis for negotiation. To accept them as such, they argued, would be to yield fundamentally, to accept the principle that war is all but inevitable, no matter what Administration is elected in 1940, and that labor's best bet is to give the present Administration labor's support, lest the alternative be a war-time regime under even less favorable auspices.

These objectors were voted down, however, and there is increasing evidence that the truculently isolationist and anti-Administration tone of C. I. O. leaders early in the fall has given way to resignation and determination to stand by the Roosevelt Administration, whatever adjustments may be necessary. In his Labor Day speech Lewis lashed out at the New Deal not only for "callous indifference" and "cold brutality" toward labor but for its preoccupation with "the political quarrels in Europe." And he made it plain that "those who seek the votes of the workers of America" must guarantee among other things "freedom from foreign wars." By the time his convention met at San Francisco, scarcely more than a month later, he was still unequivocally against American participation in the war, but he urged complete confidence in the President's wisdom in foreign affairs, warmly defended the lifting of the embargo, and at the same time displayed more than a little uncertainty as to whether or not this country could keep out of the war after all. Imperceptibly the theme changed from a simple anti-war position to a demand for labor representation in the event of war: "There is but one thing for the men and women of labor to do and that is . . . build up a modern labor movement here in America to such proportions that its voice may never be ignored here in our homeland whether it be for peace or whether it be for war." And "The future will determine, according to the incidents which occur, the question of whether or not the American people will again be compelled to take up the sword to maintain what they understand to be the integrity of their political forms of government and the validity of the institutions that they have through the decades created." Speeches by other C. I. O. leaders during and since the convention sounded the same note, even more clearly, and the conviction is inescapable that the die has been cast; the haggling has not yet started, but the decision to bargain has been made.

Something must have happened between Labor Day and the opening of the convention on October 10 that induced in John L. Lewis this change of heart. It cannot

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have been solely the receipt of the War Department's thoughts on M-Day; if anything that would have heightened his isolationism. Three possibilities, not mutually exclusive, present themselves: first, Lewis sees in the situation the promise of power, a chance to assume the Gompers mantle as the man who helped win the war on the labor front; second, he and his colleagues see an opportunity to speed up organization under the benevolent eye of a cooperating government which will not have to take any back-talk from industry; and, third, there is in the generals' proposals the implied threat of a ruthless drive by a war government against the C. I. O. should it reject their overtures out of hand.

There is no evidence pointing to the first of these possibilities. Even if labor succeeds in forcing genuine representation on the War Labor Board it is certain that the government would not dream of tossing the A. F. of L. at the feet of John L. Lewis—especially if the federation has in fact already accepted Mr. Johnson's M-Day prescription. Nor is there much reason to assume the validity of the second alternative. Industry might well be subjected to curbs as drastic as those imposed on labor, but without the possibility of winning union victories through strikes or otherwise, with wages fixed by the government, and with patrioteering rampant, it is unlikely that any labor leader can hopefully anticipate war time as a god-sent opportunity to revitalize trade unionism. This leaves the dismal third possibility: that labor can take what it has been offered—or else.

The proposals drawn up by Mr. Johnson and his colleagues were not blatantly offered as an ultimatum, but neither were they offered as a tentative suggestion. They constitute the government's mobilization program, and they are being shown to labor in advance with an invitation to cooperate. Labor can reject the invitation, but if it does it must realize what the attitude of the government will be when the day of reckoning comes: "We have tried to treat with these people, but they would not listen to reason." Then the handiwork of the Dies committee, the exhibits of red-smeared C. I. O. unions, will be taken out and reexamined—only this time they will be taken seriously by a war-time Administration, which will act accordingly. This is what worries the C. I. O. leaders as they take bearings. Rather than court such a fate they are seemingly prepared to surrender in advance on the crucial issue of labor support for the war, and to throw all their weight into the fight for adequate representation. In this connection it is worth noting the persistent rumors that the War Industries Board which Roosevelt just "disbanded" will soon be revived, with labor represented by Sidney Hillman for the C. I. O. and Daniel Tobin for the A. F. of L.—provided that the two organizations sign a treaty of peace. For better or worse, organized labor is getting set to run the risk of a war-time catalepsy, hoping primarily that this country will keep out, but that if it doesn't there will be those in high places who will bring it out of the trance when the war is over.

Night Falls in Berlin

BY TONI CHRISTEN

Berlin, September 28

BERLIN'S most lavish Cabaret—das Kabarett der Komiker—was to open its winter season on September 1 with a show that bore the curious title, "Nacht muss es sein!" (Night must fall). Its directors feared they would not be allowed to open, but at the last minute the Ministry of Propaganda decreed that theaters, concerts, and minor entertainments, with the exception of public dancing, were to go on as usual in spite of the war. Moving-picture houses had to ban all tragedies and put on comedies. Cabarets and their humor were more than welcome.

"Nacht muss es sein" had a good press, and the Berliners stumbled through pitch-black streets to see it. The title stimulated their ever-ready wit, but the author and composer had not dreamed of any reference to blackouts or war. They had desired merely to give a pleasant picture of night life in Berlin—in peace-time Berlin. People liked the show because it recalled their once brilliantly lit Kurfürstendamm or Unter den Linden. It made them forget the dreary present.

For the real blackout came soon. As early as May some people were saying that Danzig and the Corridor would soon be German again. They would add cheerfully, "Our government is planning an alliance with Russia, and the two will divide Poland between them." By June the same well-informed people—they could be met with any time in a store or subway—predicted the mobilization of the German army for August 15. "The order has been given that the harvest must be brought in before that date, whether the grain is ripe or not." By July the press was seething with reports of Polish atrocities against the German minorities in Poland. The facts brought forward were impressive. The "people," that vague, amorphous mass of unconnected individuals that set in motion public opinion even in totalitarian states, had a good deal to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

say. "Our army will be moving into Poland any day now; we had the same headlines before the Czech crisis." Nobody, however, thought it worth while to spill German blood to recapture the Corridor or to avenge the mistreated minorities. Rumors that Poland was making a desperate last-minute effort to defend itself were received with concern. But optimism still ran high: "England will not back Poland, and Hitler does not want war either—real war. It would ruin all that he has built up in the last six years."

The Russo-German pact was received not as a bombshell but as an expected display of brilliant fireworks. "Didn't we tell you it would happen?" Some persons were a little overcome, but, oh, wasn't it wonderful! "Now we shan't have war; it would be madness for the Allies to fight us." Many a German then and later began to speculate with naive enthusiasm on the great days that lay ahead for both Germans and Russians. The German Ministry of Propaganda invented the happy slogan: "Whenever in the past Germany and Russia were united they were truly happy and prosperous."

My janitress said, "There is really not much difference between communism and National Socialism, is there?" She smiled cynically, but she had been that way for the past six months. Her former automatic Nazi enthusiasm had been dampened. She had seen too much high living among the upper bourgeoisie while the standard of living for the working classes continually deteriorated. The gap between the classes had been widening. Herr Ley of the labor front had cleverly cemented this gap for a while, but the artificial prosperity enjoyed by the few during the last years had broken it wide open.

There is no doubt that the pact was popular with all classes, if only for the reason that England might now be frightened into acquiescence so far as German demands on Poland were concerned. Apparently it was no tour de force for the German people to hang Stalin's picture beside Hitler's and Mussolini's.

When on August 26 the German population learned that the army had actually moved into the Corridor and that "German guns were roaring over Polish soil," as the radio announcer neatly phrased it, they sighed and hoped the conflict would begin and end right there. But their smiles grew thin in the days that followed, and a wary look crept into their eyes. With dismay they watched the anti-air-raid preparations in the streets. The big buildings in the center of the city and in some of the suburbs, particularly around the Funkturm, were manned with soldiers and fitted out with anti-aircraft guns. Sandbags were heaped over basement windows and air-raid shelters hastily prepared. Curiously enough, the air-raid precautions of the big city were far from adequate. Even in the center there was an insufficient number of shelters, and the suburbs had almost none. Nor were house-owners any too eager to provide them. In Charlottenburg, for instance, they did nothing until the middle of September, and then simply cleared out a basement room and padded the windows with sandbags. Protection against gas attacks was practically non-existent; scientific gas-proof shelters could be found only in the ministries, some of the bigger banks, and the homes of the staff connected with the military airdromes and barracks around Berlin. Even by the end of the month the majority of people did not own a gas-mask.

For three days the smell of revolution was in the air—of a women's revolution, for it was they who flared up in resentment and despair. Quite suddenly they found words to curse Hitler. Like strange, unconnected little jets of flame their hatred burst out—in market-halls, over store counters, in house corridors, and around basement laundry tubs. And the flames grew, and linked up, and threatened a general conflagration. "We haven't had a quiet hour since that man came to power . . . he is gone mad . . . somebody ought to shoot him like a dog!" How could they remain silent with their husbands sent to the front, their children hungry, their homes in danger of being bombed. Food was almost as scarce as it had been in 1918. "We have gone through starvation once, we don't want to go through it again."

Wrathfully they waved their new food cards in my face. "Look at this! Ninety grams of butter a week! Bacon, oil, cheese, meat, milk, eggs, cereals—everything rationed. And even your ration can't be obtained. No meat at the butcher's today, not a scrap of fresh meat. And no potatoes either. And look here, no soap! How do they expect me to keep my house and my children clean with a handful of soapsuds each month? Say, my husband will have to grow a beard. He is allowed one shaving-stick in five months."

Great confusion was caused by the new restrictions, by the difficulty of purchasing provisions or clothes or shoes or even a spool of thread, and in spite of police precautions shops were raided in the poorer quarters of Berlin. But worse than the fear of future starvation was the immediate sorrow of the women who saw their men leaving for the front. In Döberitz and Köpenick troop trains were stopped as women threw themselves on the rails and clung there until the police clubbed them away. There were no flowers, no songs, no cheerful goodby

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wavings for soldiers leaving for the east or the west. Troops were entrained clandestinely, and if any came back, they came at night, on the hospital trains. Hospitals quickly filled up around Berlin, but they were closely guarded and no news about their wounded filtered through to the outside. After September 10 one saw more women in mourning.

And always women's faces were gray with fear and sorrow, whether they sat with downcast eyes in the subway or scanned the skies while a German plane hummed overhead. Their loud resentment was damped down as quickly as it had flared up. New decrees promising death and imprisonment to anyone who dared criticize the government or alarm the population silenced their bold tongues. They kept still—the charwoman, the janitress, the market women, the shopkeepers, the housewives who lived in your street, the unknown woman who jostled furiously against you in the post office, even the young Nazi matron who supervised the welfare work in your quarter. They dared not speak now. Docilely they stood in line for hours to get their bits of rationed food; they spoke indifferent words for the benefit of listening strangers.

They told of their duties as *Luftschutzwart* or Red Cross assistant or welfare nurse. Those who had no small children at home had been asked to go into the country and help the farming population. The newspapers displayed large advertisements asking women to enter big industrial concerns and be trained for expert jobs. Yes, sooner or later they might consider such a job if their husbands continued to be at the front. One morning a woman friend whose husband was in the Air Ministry called me up and told me that she had applied for a secretarial job in her husband's department. Of course she had to learn stenography first, but before long all women would be mobilized for work, she thought. Apparently she was taking early precautionary measures to avoid being drafted into a munitions factory.

Yet everywhere was still that undercurrent of unbelief that the war would go on or "really start." "Himmler is said to have told Hitler that in case of a real war there might be a revolution."

S. S. and S. A. troopers were secretly stationed in halls and barracks and schoolhouses all over Berlin. Occasionally one would get a glimpse of an open police truck carrying some poor person off to jail. One morning a police-car with a machine-gun in the rear dashed along Unter den Linden toward the Alexanderplatz. A woman dressed in rags, with untidy hair and aggressively watchful eyes, came and sat in a fashionable sidewalk cafe, ordered *Kaffee und Kuchen*. One was reminded of the post-war days of 1919-20 when the underworld rose to the surface. Instinctively women of the well-to-do classes wore their older coats and last year's hats, if they wore hats at all.

Everywhere was tension, tightening of the nerves. People seemed to take pleasure in fighting each other on small issues. They went into unexplained rages over store counters. Quite unexpectedly a waitress in a Kurfürstendamm cafe had hysterics and began to exclaim against Hitler. One of the customers took her by the arm and dragged her out of the room. The manager came after them both, and outside in the corridor explained to the customer that the girl had had a bad time—her husband was in a concentration camp, she was trying to keep herself and her small child from starving by serving in the cafe. The customer, a young S. S. man in mufti, shrugged his shoulders and said, "I don't want to have her jailed, I dragged her out so that nobody would hear her." All night huge searchlights play over the city. Occasionally there is an air-raid alarm. Next morning people look a bit more sullen, more hollow-eyed than ever. "God," the workmen say, "we are worked to the limit, and now they even rob us of our few hours' sleep!"

But there is still hope, and the hope is called Russia. "If Russia will fight with us, there will be no war." Their minds, if not their faces, are turned eastward.

> It is as if life had retreated eastward. As if the Germanic life were slowly ebbing away from contact with Western Europe, ebbing to the deserts of the east. . . . The inevitable, mysterious barrier has fallen again, and the great leaning of the Germanic spirit is once more eastward, toward Russia, toward Tartary. The strange vortex of Tartary has become the positive center again; the positivity of Western Europe is broken. The positivity of our civilization has broken.

D. H. Lawrence wrote this in "a letter from Germany" in 1924. It seems poignantly descriptive of the present German situation. There is a fatalism in the way Germany is turning to the East today.

Yet the war is not lost, and as reports of successes pour in, the temper of the German people is likely to improve. The war may become more popular, especially if bombardment of the civilian population is avoided. The British Empire may be destroyed in this war. It is possible though not likely. But whatever the outcome of this terrific duel—if it is carried on at all—the losses will be so great that victor and vanquished alike will be ruined. And when the time comes, in what direction will the Germans turn for hope and reconstruction? To the West? Six years of strenuous training in Nazi politics and economics have turned the minds of the German youth away from Western ideologies. They can no longer understand, let alone appreciate, Western liberalism. They will turn to the East, because the East speaks a language more like their own. They are subtly pushed in that direction even now.

The war goes on. Fearful eyes scan the skies. When will the enemy come? Will the ghastly show never stop? "Nacht muss es sein!"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On Britain's Left and Right

BY HAROLD J. LASKI

London, October 15

MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S speech of October 12 marks, I think, an epoch in the war. It is a pronouncement that the period of "appeasement" is definitely over, that, so far as Great Britain is concerned, no peace is possible which leaves the aggressor the fruit of his conquests. It did not close the door on peace; but it made it as plain as words can do that, if Hitler genuinely wants to end the war, acts and not verbal promises are required. Mr. Chamberlain's speech met, I think, with the general approval of the House of Commons. Criticism came either from absolute pacifists like Mr. Lansbury or from those—like Sir Stafford Cripps, who made perhaps the ablest speech in the debate—who want from the British government a detailed declaration of war aims now. But the pacifists apart, there was widespread agreement that Herr Hitler's "terms" offered no prospect of serious discussion.

The best commentary on the position was offered by the electors of Clackmannan in a by-election. A Labor candidate fought a pacifist candidate in this working-class constituency and won by fifteen thousand to a thousand votes. That, I think, is the general mood of the population. There is not an atom of enthusiasm for war as such. There is rather an eager desire for peace as soon as it can be attained on terms which offer guaranties against a renewal of aggression in the wonted Hitlerian manner. But there is also a grim determination to go on until the shadow of perpetual threat is removed from our lives. Those who, like Mr. Shaw, argue that Hitler has now been "appeased" and that we ought to trust him rather than risk appallingly destructive conflict have no serious following.

This does not mean that the country, especially the Labor Party, is by any means satisfied with the government. There is a strong demand that the claims of India be satisfied; the paradox of fighting Hitler and maintaining a semi-despotic government in India is widely acknowledged. The recognition of India's claim to self-government will have to be conceded, and the sooner this is done the better will be the morale of all of us. There is a growing insistence, too, that those British colonies not yet ripe for self-government should be brought under a greatly strengthened mandates system. There is deep dissatisfaction at some of Mr. Chamberlain's appointments, above all at that of Sir John Gilmour —a forgotten Tory relic—to the important Ministry of Shipping. The plans of Dr. Burgin, the Minister of Supply, are not regarded as in any way adequate to his problems; and most of us think that the structure proposed for the economic coordination of the national resources is defective both in principle and in detail. The Ministry of Information is generally regarded with mingled amusement and contempt, and its drastic reorganization is now under way. Some of these issues, no doubt, reveal the inevitable difficulties of mobilizing a democracy for war. But some of them, the problems, for instance, connected with the major social services, reveal the bias of a Tory government whose incurable fault is invariably lack of imagination. There will be serious fighting about them before many days have passed.

In *The Nation* of September 30 Mr. Villard expressed the view that the war had struck a serious blow at parliamentary institutions. Outsiders, no doubt, see many things that are concealed from those on the spot. I can only record my own view that its result, so far, has been a remarkable renovation of those institutions. Members feel more free from party ties; they criticize with vigor; grievances are ventilated with a persistency that is notable. Contrary also to Mr. Villard's impression, there has been, so far, no interference with essential freedoms. The pacifists, the Communists, the I. L. P. freely distribute their propaganda; so, also, in a characteristically slinking way, do the fascists of the Mosley brand. There is wide resentment at M. Daladier's suppression of the French Communist Party. It is felt that this is incompatible with the objects we are seeking to attain. I know of no attempt to interfere with the normal freedom of the press in any realm where discussion is desirable. The censorship, of course, imposes irritating, and often stupid, control of war news; and the radio has been handled with an unintelligence that is the despair of those who realize its immense potentialities. But the result of this has been not only a continuous barrage of criticism but a greatly increased interest in obtaining foreign stations. A bus conductor spoke to me the other day with real amusement of the German radio's skilful impersonation of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Among the major intellectual casualties of the war I think the Communist Party must be reckoned. The policy of the Soviet Union has left it bewildered. On September 2 it issued an able pamphlet by its secretary, Harry Pollitt, urging the need to fight fascism and insisting that this could only be done effectively by a workers' government. On October 7 this line was officially repu-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

diated, Mr. Pollitt was deposed from his post, though it is announced he is to remain in the party, and the war was denounced as an imperialist adventure by Great Britain. The party line seems to be that nothing done by Moscow can be wrong. But in the intervals of action by Moscow the party shuffles from side to side, contradicting itself relentlessly in its desire not to deviate from its masters. It is possible to respect people who, like Mr. Strachey, frankly declare that they cannot penetrate the veil behind which Stalin conceals his purposes. But it is difficult to respect those who shout approval of them without any notion of what they are, who had up to August 21 denounced as a shameless lie the idea of a Hitler-Stalin pact and immediately afterward hurried to defend it as a supreme contribution to peace. It will take the Communist Party a long time to recover from its present habit of defending policies it cannot explain by arguments which have rarely any consistency from one week to another. Hitler is no longer the embodiment of evil, and all his past is conveniently forgotten. The one point on which others of the left sympathize with the Communists is their demand that a British statesman of eminence go to Moscow to discover the intentions of the Soviet government. I think myself that this is a wise demand. And I can understand that his discoveries would interest and enlighten none more than the members of the Communist Party.

The Labor Party is predominantly engaged in three tasks. (1) It goes on with the normal task of providing the necessary criticism of government policy. I think it is true to say that, in this realm, it has a wider audience and a deeper general approval than at any previous time. On the technical issues of war administration some of its members, notably Arthur Greenwood, have done invaluable work. (2) It is concerned with the issue of an official declaration of its war aims. For the past three weeks there have been long and careful discussions of this problem. Premature publication, in so rapidly shifting a world, would obviously be a mistake; it is important not to pin its faith to principles which a month from now may cease to have meaning. But I think it is now true that the general lines of its international program have taken firm shape. In the next fortnight the whole movement, industrial and political, will probably be asked to approve a declaration which the party will be prepared to defend not only against Hitler but also against the British government should a divergence of its aims from those of the government be revealed. (3) The party is rapidly resuming its propaganda and educational work, naturally under conditions of some difficulty owing to transport problems and the "blackout." But in such Labor meetings as I have addressed since the war I have been greatly impressed by two things. First, there is an intense demand, which will have to be satisfied, for positive aims in international affairs. "We know what we are *against*," said a miner to me; "we want to be very definite what we are *for*." The Labor Party will have to satisfy that demand. More, it will have to bend its energies to the serious problems of post-war reconstruction.

Drawing by Strom
Shaw Pricks the British Empire

It may sound premature to speak of these. But from innumerable conversations I have had I am convinced that the war has already laid the foundations of something akin to a psychological revolution in men's minds. Partly, this is the result of the very interesting interchange of ideas that has come from the evacuation of hundreds of thousands. Partly, also, the temporary suspension of social services like education in the "dangerous" areas has given a new idea of their significance to the voters. A farm laborer from whom I had never been able to extract a political opinion said to me spontaneously the other day, "Why should my boy have half a day's schooling and the Eton boys go on as usual?" That kind of questioning is going on in many thousands of households, and the Labor Party will have to adjust itself to a constituency which will expect far more from the state after the war.

The Soviet Union remains the great enigma. My impression is that opinion, so far, may be described as follows: It is pretty universally felt that the pact with Germany is indefensible. All save the Communists believe that it precipitated the war, even though they may blame Mr. Chamberlain for his blunders and delay over the Anglo-Soviet negotiations. Opinion is deeply divided over the Russian partition of Poland. The trade-union leaders tend to be very critical of it. The more general view is that, in the long run, it will prove valuable in checking Hitler's eastern ambitions. There is a general tendency to withhold blame from Soviet expansion in the Baltic. Partly, this is because it is regarded as anti-Hitler in its effective result, and, partly, because it is realized that Russia needs safeguards against the use of the Baltic by its enemies. Its treatment of Finland is regarded as a test case. If Stalin imposes unjust terms upon Finland by the threat of force, many of those now most concerned to defend Russia will find it impossible to do so; and this, of course, the more if Finland is compelled to fight.

There is singularly little comment upon the United States. With few exceptions those whom I meet fully understand America's desire to keep out of the war; and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

there is a profound sense that President Roosevelt has handled his very delicate problems with much skill. I have heard great resentment at Senator Borah's remark about this being a "phony war," and bitter criticism of Colonel Lindbergh's oracular utterances. Everyone feels that American mediation, if it is to come, is a matter upon which the President is by far the best judge; and there is complete confidence that he will not seek the kind of mediation which merely procures an armistice instead of a genuine and enduring peace.

Propaganda's Golden Age

BY MAX LERNER

II. A "TVA" for the Opinion Industries

LIBERALISM fights for its dogmas inch by inch before it yields them. The doctrine of the final triumph of the idea—that the truth, even though unaided, must prevail—died a hard death, if indeed it may be said to have died at all. But even more tenacious is the linked notion that there exists anything like a competitive system for ideas. To say that because I can get up and spout on a soap-box in Union Square or write in *The Nation* or start a newspaper in competition with Mr. Hearst or Mr. Howard I have a freedom of opinion comparable to theirs is fantastic. I speak with the voice of one, Mr. Howard with the voice of millions. It is not because he is a better man than I, or because his ideas are truer or sounder, or because they represent more authentically the humanist tradition. It is because he has a major control in the opinion industry and I have not. My freedom to start a newspaper in competition with him is as real as my freedom to enter the field against the United States Steel Corporation. The fact in each instance is that it is hollow to talk of "freedom," whether economic freedom or freedom of opinion, except where there is equality or at least a framework of governmental control to reduce inequality.

Freedom is not laissez faire. We have come by this time to recognize that in the area of our economic life, but in the area of opinion we still cling to the belief that it is. It has taken us decades of social blundering to understand that economic freedom in the sense of the unregulated decisions of an irresponsible capitalism is no longer possible. We had better face the fact that the opinion industries are as much "affected with a public interest" as any others. A nation that has decided on a program of democratic control of the rest of its industrial area endangers the entire structure of control by allowing the corporate interests to shape public opinion at will. It is very well for liberals to speak of making a weapon of liberalism; but to make a fetish of the principle is far different from wielding the weapon.

But all ideas have their uses. There has been much discussion among liberals of the problem of means and ends. We tend to forget that here, as elsewhere, absolutes are arid, and that ends and means are interrelated. Freedom is an end with respect to economic security; a culture that does not give scope to diversity of opinion is an unfree culture no matter how economically secure it may be, and the whole economic life of that culture is truncated. But freedom is also a means with respect to economic security, majority rule, cultural creativeness. To have an abstract freedom of opinion in a culture that is so organized that freedom—or, better, laissez faire—of opinion plays into the hands of economic scarcity and economic tyranny is but sand in our mouths—not nourishing but a matter for gritting of teeth. And that is actually the case with us. Freedom of opinion is precious in itself, yet it is also self-defeating if it is not used to insure the free building up of majority opinion, the orderly replacement of one majority by another, the refashioning of economic institutions to achieve the maximum security for all. Freedom has little meaning except in the context of equality, just as economic equality has only a stunted meaning except in a free society.

We must organize our freedom of opinion in such a way as to make it usable and not academic. But how do it? It is not an easy task, and it has its risks. The first step is to face the problem and face it in a tough-minded way. The question of means can then be tackled. My own preference is to extend the principles of the TVA "yardstick" and the SEC "truth in securities" into the opinion industries.

We must avoid a government-operated radio as in Great Britain, and we must avoid a government-monopolized press as in Germany, Italy, Russia. I propose the TVA principle in our radio system: in addition to, and side by side with, the great private broadcasting chains, let us have two major airways reserved for the government and run for it not by its bureaucrats but by the guild of radio artists. That it can be done has been demonstrated with brilliant success by the Federal Theater, which has prodded the creative forces of the theater from their slumber. Why should not a similar Federal Radio chain, run non-competitively and without advertising, serve to set a standard for the other chains to live up to,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and serve to broadcast the merciless truth about our social conditions when the other chains fear to? The radio is inherently a better mechanism to use in the competition of ideas than is the press. To begin with, the air already belongs to the nation and there can be no question raised legitimately of confiscation. The radio chains have their present position on sufferance. It would be only a step forward to use two of these strategic airways directly for public purposes and turn them over to the technicians, just as the actual teaching in our school and university system is in the hands of technicians.

With respect to the movies, the TVA principle would have to be different: it would have to be a private TVA. But why should not socially conscious money enter the movie industry, and set up great producing units that would put out the sort of film toward which Hollywood is only now beginning to make some feeble gestures? And why should not an RFC that finances all sorts of schemes be used to finance culturally productive enterprise of this sort? This would involve tackling the problem of distribution outlets as well; and there is much to be said for a framework of governmental controls over these outlets. It would involve also using the new film consumer organizations to give utterance to protests against the cowardly and the shoddy and to shape the supply in relation to the demand.

As for the press, the only solution is the long and hard road of creating competition by the deliberate and large-scale process of creating new competitors. There is no inherent economic law toward gigantism among newspapers. We could do with a good many more newspapers, even though it meant that none of them could be leviathans. Here, too, in every locality where there is no competition of ideas in the press, socially conscious money must enter to create competition—and it would be a legitimate function of the government to subsidize individuals and cooperatives that want to start such newspapers, much as we subsidize new housing. In the end, in the hands of good working newspaper men and women, they would pay for themselves financially and more than pay for themselves in cultural enrichment. Alexander Meiklejohn has suggested that our press be socialized like our universities. We could do much worse and we are doing much worse. But there is another possibility: to use the government power and the whole liberal tradition to bring about competition of ideas in a press that remains free from government control; which is, in the best sense, to socialize the press.

Given the reorganized opinion industries, one can turn to the problem of the control of outright propaganda with some hope of success. The problems of the internal organization of the opinion industries are problems of power; the propaganda problem is one of truth. The first involves the adequate representation of diverse points of view, equality of bargaining power in opinion, the accessibility of adequate information for the common man; the second involves a ban on flagrantly distorted information, intended deliberately as a poison for the public mind. The first involves the break-up of the opinion monopolies and the creation of a positive framework for competition in ideas; the second involves the regulation of cutthroat competition and fraudulent practices in opinion. Of these the first is most important in the long run if we are ever to have a genuine market for ideas; but the second is more urgent in the short run as a matter of sheer democratic survival.

In meeting the propaganda danger, something like the SEC pattern would be the most effective procedure. We have a Truth in Securities Act to make sure that there is no rigging of the stock market, no false prospectuses, no unethical practices in the marketing of stocks and bonds. Yet we allow rigging the opinion market, unethical practices in the marketing of ideas. Are our securities more precious to us than our security, our stocks more delicate plants than our ideas, our investors more in need of protection than our common people? We have a Wheeler-Lea act against false advertising of drugs and cosmetics; are we to have nothing to protect us against the infinitely more dangerous advertising of anti-labor, anti-democratic, anti-Semitic lies?

I know that liberals will immediately say: Why could not a Truth in Opinion Act be used against the left as well as the right? The answer is that it is already in use against the left. Anti-alien and anti-radical measures are already being passed in Congress and in virtually every state legislature. Have any of the corporate heads or any of their legal aids protested against them? The Dies committee is already smearing the left with its so-called investigations; has it done anything substantial to investigate corporate fascism and regional fascism in America? We know perfectly well that before the legislation was enacted to control business, labor was already hemmed in by a de facto regulation. There was always a danger that the regulatory structure imposed upon business would be turned against labor as well; and, indeed, the Supreme Court tried its best to do so. Yet the total effect has been on the whole to carry through the original legislative intentions. The liberals and the left need not fear the creation of precedents that may be used against them. When a time of crisis comes, it will not be past precedents that count; new precedents, as Hitler has shown in Germany, can easily be created in the interests of ruthless power. What must be feared is not precedents but the sort of social breakdown that will make all precedents, good and bad, equally irrelevant.

To avoid this social breakdown we must move in the direction of a clear economic program, calling for democratic control of industry, and at the same time in the direction of regulation of anti-social propaganda. Individuals of the highest caliber would be required to man

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a board such as I have suggested. There come to my mind men like Lloyd Garrison, Alexander Meiklejohn, Alvin Johnson, William Allen White—men wise and tolerant in the way of words but so tenacious of the ethics of the thinking craft that they could recognize the spurious and dishonest. The task of such a board would be to require complete information about the provenience and financing of political statements, to see that all inflammatory radio statements are backed up by a bill of particulars, to allow for the answering of controversial material—and, if necessary, to ban material that is poisonous and spurious. The decisions of this board would be, of course, reviewable by the courts under the rule of law. With any sort of good direction the task of the board would become that of monitor rather than censor; and as one of the consequences the press and radio would in the long run set up their own code of ethics. Such a law would be hard to write. Yet surely it would be no more difficult than the drafting of the SEC.

This would not proceed on the principle that there need be no tolerance for the intolerant. I think that is an unnecessarily dangerous principle. To pick the intolerant would be a subjective matter; to hound them, an all too easy absolutism. What we want to create for all is a set of rules within which tolerance and intolerance shall operate.

What chance has such a program of becoming a reality? In the immediate future, very little. The confusion between laissez faire and genuine freedom in the opinion industries is unlikely to be dissipated easily, and as long as it remains in the popular mind, any attempt, however prayerful and innocuous, to restore competition in ideas will lead to anguished howls from the monopolists—and the howls will be echoed through the entire country. Nevertheless, we must continue our attempts to clarify our thinking in this area. One of the crucial reasons for the failure of progressive movements in the past has been their unwillingness or inability to operate in this area, with the result that the mass mind has been turned against them and they have been doomed to a melancholy soliloquy.

American history is the story of the attempts of the minority will to suppress the democratic consciousness. It is the story, therefore, of successive upsurges of democratic strength, each of which has threatened to break the minority power. In 1932 there was such an upsurge. There will be another. When it comes, the progressives must understand that unless they can restore freedom in the opinion industries, they are again doomed to a brief flurry of excitement and reformism and then to a frustrated soliloquy.

[*Mr. Lerner's article, the first half of which was printed in last week's issue, will be discussed editorially in a forthcoming issue.*]

Everybody's Business

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

The Investment Outlook

DISCUSSING, on September 30, the slump in government bonds that followed the outbreak of war, this department suggested that the weight of idle money would soon provide a corrective. In the weeks since, an appreciable recovery has occurred, and the market is now proceeding on an even keel, rendering unnecessary additional ballast in the shape of Federal Reserve purchases. What is more, the Treasury has been able to carry out a major refunding operation on terms which, if slightly less favorable than those possible in June, are very much better than anything that would have been possible a few weeks earlier. To be specific, it was able to induce holders of $526,000,000 of 1⅜ per cent notes to exchange into a new 1 per cent issue due March 15, 1944. This means a saving of about $1,800,000 in interest charges and indicates that the government can still borrow on extremely advantageous terms.

Cheap money is also available to private industry, provided the borrower can show a sound balance-sheet, but the oft-prophesied revival in corporate financing is still just around the corner. Prior to September there had been a fair volume of refunding operations, particularly by the utilities, which despite all their tribulations were in numerous instances able to replace high-coupon bonds by 3 or 3½ per cent issues and thus improve the equity of their long-suffering stockholders. But private issues calling for new money—that is to say, representing additions to real capital—were few and far between. According to the *Commercial and Financial Chronicle*, total financing of this character for the first nine months of the year was only $302,000,000. This is the poorest showing since 1935 and compares with $705,000,000 and $1,075,000,000 for the corresponding periods of 1938 and 1937 respectively.

Since economists of almost all schools are agreed that recovery must lag unless there is a steady increase in new investment, these figures do not make very cheerful reading. Fortunately the statistics of new public financing do not tell the whole story. Many big corporations are extremely well supplied with cash and thus in a position to finance plant extensions without seeking the assistance of the market. Quite a number of projects involving the investment of appreciable sums have been announced in the last few weeks without any suggestion of a corresponding sale of securities. In this connection it may be noted that a small decline in public construction in September was more than offset by a 16 per cent rise in private contracts. This improvement was entirely due to a larger volume of commercial building, with contracts for factories practically double those awarded in September, 1938. Complete figures are not yet available for October, but the latest reports suggest that private contracts continue to compare favorably in volume with a year ago. However, they are not increasing rapidly enough to offset the decline in public contracts due to the diminished activity of the PWA and other federal agencies. Private enterprise will

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have to do better than this to justify its claim that public investment has become unnecessary.

Another and extremely important sector of the investment field where increasing activity can be observed is housing. The total of new dwelling units constructed during the current year is expected to reach 300,000, with a value of one billion dollars. This figure would represent an advance of 22 per cent over the 1938 figure, but it is still 100,000 below the total achieved in 1929. The possibility of a further improvement in this direction next year seems to hinge largely on the question of costs. Wholesale prices of building materials have risen 3.3 per cent since the middle of August, and further advances are threatened. Figures recently released by the SEC show that a cross-section of the building-products manufacturing industry returned profits of 12.6 per cent on sales in 1937. This suggests that there is room for a reduction in profit margins with a view to a stimulation of sales. Certainly any attempt to broaden them would react adversely on the volume of home-building. The current investigation of the building industry by the Department of Justice may, however, tend to discourage profiteering.

The rather tenuous nature of recovery in housing is illustrative of the still-undetermined course of our economy in the coming year. Unless an increasing part of our mounting industrial production can be translated into additional capital equipment, the upward trend is likely to be as rapidly reversed as it was in 1937. And no doubt, if that happens, business will once again blame the New Deal for undermining its confidence. The alibi is already being prepared. An article in the current *Commercial and Financial Chronicle* advises executives to exercise extreme caution in expanding operations so long as Mr. Roosevelt occupies the White House, or until the fiscal, labor, and business-regulation policies which Wall Street dislikes are discontinued. The same article, however, admits that the real crux of the matter is the question whether "goods will continue to be in large-enough demand to warrant further capital investments." It is not very easy to see how scrapping the New Deal would increase the demand for goods; indeed, it is much more probable that it would lead to a sharp curtailment of demand and send all the business indices plunging downward.

The fact is that the road to increased demand is wide open to business should it care to take it, and recent geometrical increases in profits in response to arithmetrical increases in output have given it the signal to go ahead. Again and again in this department, at the risk of boring my readers, I have insisted that the way to stimulate demand is to reduce prices and give elasticity to the consumer's dollar. There is nothing in the least radical about this doctrine. On the contrary, it is part and parcel of the classical principles of economics to which business likes to appeal when any restriction is put on its activities. It would be well, therefore, if our leading industrialists, instead of attempting to eat their individualist cake and have it, would try the effect of lower profit margins as a cure for anemic confidence.

Correction. On October 28 Kelvinator was mentioned in this column as among General Motors' "other interests." This, of course, should have read *Frigidaire*. Kelvinator is the product of the Nash-Kelvinator Corporation.

In the Wind

TO INTIMATES in the United States Alfred Duff Cooper has confided that Britain will have a new Prime Minister in the fairly near future. Although he will undoubtedly deny it publicly, Cooper has even told friends the name of Chamberlain's successor. It is, he says, Alfred Duff Cooper.

SCOOP: FROM the International News Service ticker. "*Amsterdam, October 20.* An early major move by Reichsführer Adolf Hitler in favor of peace or vastly increased hostilities was predicted by well-informed sources in Amsterdam today."

AT THE TIME of the Courageous sinking, London correspondents wanted to remind readers that the King and Queen had visited the ship six weeks before the war began. But the Ministry of Information banned all references to the visit, reminding correspondents that no mention could be made of the movements of the Royal Family—although the visit had been reported in newspapers throughout the world.

VIA UNDERGROUND GERMANY: A German mother taught her child to end her prayers each night by saying: "Thank God for Adolf Hitler." The child faithfully followed instructions, then one night turned bewildered to her mother and asked, "How will I end my prayers if Hitler dies?" "Oh," said the mother, "just say, Thank God."

APPARENTLY THE colonial censors are overworked. An American who received a letter from Trinidad found the envelope stamped: "Opened by the Censor." A piece of gummed paper was glued over the edge where the letter had apparently been opened. The recipient soaked the letter and removed the gummed paper. The envelope was intact.

THE "CHRISTIAN MOBILIZERS" are suffering from serious internal disorders; there was a fist-fight in their offices recently between leader Joe McWilliams and one of his chief aides. . . . It won't appear publicly for some time, but a new left-wing group is definitely being formed. . . . Newspaper circulations have nosedived sharply since the war settled down. . . . At least four more Communist Party chieftains are likely to be indicted for passport trouble.

THE BRITISH government has flashed the green light to lecturers planning American trips. At first it had intended to keep all its orators home, letting American sympathizers and Canadian speakers plead the Allied cause here. But evidence of anti-Chamberlain and even anti-British feeling here has altered the decision. Former critics of Chamberlain—like Alfred Duff Cooper—are being especially encouraged to speak here.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind—either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Holland in War Time

The Hague, October 14

IF THE war should end quickly no country would rejoice more than Holland. Yet many would regret a settlement which did not wholly remove Hitler from the scene. As long as there is a Nazi government in Berlin, nobody in Holland will feel safe. There is here a small and waning Dutch Nazi Party which still publishes a weekly, but I hear that it has lost ground rapidly since Hitler went into partnership with Stalin. Not a daily newspaper, save perhaps one, leans to the Nazi cause. It is true that bankers and traders, and Holland is a nation of traders, would be sorry to see Germany wrecked, since it is their natural hinterland and a chief customer, but those same bankers and traders are heartily behind every move to perfect the arrangements for flooding a large part of Holland to keep out the Nazis—some very interesting things are being done in this connection which never appear in print. It is also true that Holland is not nearly so menaced as Scandinavia or suffering so much. It has stood the first shock of war much better than in 1914 and better than anyone thought possible two months ago. If its merchant fleet has been thoroughly disorganized by the British blockade control, that has not been going on long enough to be felt too grievously.

There will be suffering, however, if the war continues a long time, for export and import trade is extremely important and mobilization has entailed great expense. Holland makes a good deal of money out of its colonies and will benefit from the increased prices which their products have brought since September 1, provided these products can be brought to Europe. The government is helping out the merchant marine by supplying war-time insurance and has been bringing over cargoes of grain on its own account, one of which, worth 1,500,000 guilders, was lost last week with the Binnendijk. But when I went around the harbor at Amsterdam yesterday I was appalled to see only one foreign flag in the harbor and that over a French vessel undergoing repairs. Still, the figure of the unemployed does not seem to have risen alarmingly. Some 400,000 in a population of 8,600,000 were out of work before war came, and probably not many more are now jobless. For this the mobilization is in part responsible; nearly 400,000 troops are under arms, enough, it is hoped, to keep back the Germans until the land can be flooded. But the unemployed will increase slowly and steadily if the war drags on. Everyone I have spoken with here or in England says that if the war lasts three years it will wreck the economy and the civilization of all Europe. That is the view of an important banker with whom I talked this morning and of a number of the diplomats stationed here.

Today Holland is still bartering milk, butter, and eggs for German machinery, chemicals, and medicines. It is not very eager to do this, but it does not dare to cut down the trade for fear of antagonizing the Nazis, who have for some time past been making trouble by demanding the removal of Jewish directors and owners of Dutch firms as a price of continued German orders. The Nazis have also threatened to throw their business to Belgium. Blackjacking is now a regular part of German business policy. Already the Dutch government has had to introduce gasless Sundays, and sugar rationing, the first of a series in all probability, goes into effect in two days. To set an example, the royal family has returned to horses and taken up bicycles—it seems to me that Holland must have the largest number of bicycles per capita of any country on earth and the highest percentage of reckless riders. Outwardly, the country looks prosperous and happy despite the depression that existed in certain lines before the war. The trains are crowded and so are the cafes; the shopping streets are jammed, and the movies—mostly American—very well patronized.

One thing is notable about the press in Holland, and that is the volume of excellent American news that it carries. The dailies are ahead of the English papers in this respect. Indeed, the amount of their foreign telegraphic news and the excellence of their special correspondents in the great capitals are striking and ought to make a profound impression on such Germans as come here. I hear the Dutch papers criticized on the ground that their editorials exert no influence either in peace or war, but I suspect they are well aware of the danger of being too aggressively anti-German just now. If they are not brilliant editorially, they still keep up high standards and give no impression of being primarily advertising mediums. They are numerous too, especially when one recalls that Chicago has only one morning newspaper (and look at the damn thing) and New York really only two. That is not the only thing in which Holland is ahead of us. It makes a New Dealer hang his head in shame to see how housing in this country has kept up with the growth of population—21 per cent in fifteen years. All the cities have superb blocks of new homes on their fringes. Page all our innumerable housing authorities!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS *and the* ARTS

HAVE WE AN AMERICAN ART?

BY CONSTANCE ROURKE

GIST OF ART. By John Sloan. American Artists' Group. $3.75.

AN AMERICAN ARTIST'S STORY. By George Biddle. Little, Brown and Company. $4.

AND HE SAT AMONG THE ASHES: A Biography of Louis M. Eilshemius. By William Schack. American Artists' Group. $3.

MODERN AMERICAN PAINTING. By Peyton Boswell, Jr. Dodd, Mead and Company. $5.

A TREASURY OF ART MASTERPIECES. Edited by Thomas Craven. Simon and Schuster. $10.

HAVE WE AN AMERICAN ART? By Edward Alden Jewell. Longmans, Green and Company. $2.75.

AMERICA'S OLD MASTERS. By James Thomas Flexner. Viking Press. $3.75.

THE ARTIST OF THE REVOLUTION: The Early Life of Charles Willson Peale. By Charles Coleman Sellers. Feather and Good. $7.50.

AMERICAN art is having something of a gala day, to judge by the number of current exhibitions, anthologies, histories, biographies, autobiographies, and critical inquiries the season has brought us, with others in the immediate past and more promised. An explosion of interest is occurring not unlike that which American poetry enjoyed some twenty or twenty-five years ago.

Among the artists no single impresario has come forward to rival Amy Lowell among the poets by a gift for reverberating publicity; but contemporary painting has its enthusiasts, or at least one, who like Miss Lowell have played favorites, and other parallels between the two movements are extensive. They began at about the same time, around 1910, each with a bias toward the American subject or scene —in poetry through Masters, Lindsay, and Sandburg, in painting through Sloan, Henri, and other members of the "Eight," unpleasantly called the "ashcan school." Each movement has experienced a strong French infusion, and the two have been closely intertwined through friendships. Poetry developed in the Middle West earlier than did painting and became part of a general literary insurgence. Painting, though less in the public eye, fought its way through the dense undergrowth of a dealers' market in French art in New York. It is now well out in the open. American art is to be seen in all parts of the country with a multitude of fresh subjects; and painters are disclosing literary gifts. In the bulk of their writings they threaten to match the war correspondents, that is, if we count one reproduction of a painting as equal to ten printed pages, which seems fair enough.

What John Sloan and the other members of the "Eight" accomplished in their fighting years was not so much a discovery or rediscovery of the American scene as proof that its raw or homely aspects could become subjects for art: scrubwomen at their daily tasks, loafers at a bar, women cooking a late meal in a shabby apartment. No one of the "Eight" fought this battle more resolutely than did Sloan, both as a teacher and by the example of his own work, yet in "Gist of Art" he is concerned not with old wars but with his craft. He is against "direct" painting, passionately in favor of underpainting, glazing, low relief, what he calls sculpturing in paint, and a conscious division of form and color. One may belong to the other side at any point yet find his concern irresistible because of the ardent and generous character from which it so clearly derives. Here in terms almost wholly of techniques we have the sharply drawn self-portrait of one who is continually refreshed by the springs of visual experience. Some 270 of Sloan's paintings, etchings, and drawings, reproduced in a time sequence at the end of the book, are the more enlivening because of the candid salty bits of Sloan's talk set alongside of them.

Toward the end of "An American Artist's Story" George Biddle says, by way of retrospect, that the "Eight" had hardly begun to attract public attention when "an intellectual rift" occurred, signalized by the appearance of a group of modernists who were unconcerned with the American subject. Under the influence of French art they tended toward abstraction. Mr. Biddle does not trace the course of this group, perhaps because his own allegiances in art did not develop until after the war, nor do we learn by what transit he passed from some of the more exotic phases of modernism to the point where he could paint the murals in the Department of Justice Building or "In Memoriam, Sacco and Vanzetti." Contemporary use of art as social protest or social affirmation, or, as is more commonly said, as propaganda, seems a clear sequence out of the work of the "Eight." Sloan's cartoons in the old *Masses* are a definite antecedent. It is stimulating to keep such continuities in mind. But if Mr. Biddle omits an account of this step he has written a highly readable personal record with a broad sketching in of art movements and social backgrounds, as he traces his emergence as an artist from Philadelphia, Groton, and Harvard by way of the Far West, the South Seas, and Paris. His descriptions of personalities, particularly if they tend toward the bizarre, have a way of lighting up general issues. Sometimes they provide illumination of the farther past in our art history, as does the strongly drawn chapter on Mary Cassatt.

The biography of Eilshemius, the self-styled old Mahatma, goes off on another tack altogether. We shall hardly

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

expect to find there a reflection of broad movements. Eilshemius has been cut off from the contemporary world by an obsession as to recognition which has driven him to the brink of the psychopathic. His life seems to have contained no dramatic episodes; his free and rather delicate lyric talent has shown no marked stages of development. But it is humanly as well as aesthetically significant that a gift such as his could carry a dead weight through many years and keep its intrinsic quality. This is matter for a slender, sympathetic study. Mr. Schack has blown it up beyond the natural scale of its form and content in "And He Sat Among the Ashes," producing a massive book packed with inconsiderable detail. His tone, unfortunately, is facetious, and the slight inner theme is lost.

If Eilshemius represents an exception or digression, we return to the question of movements in Mr. Boswell's spacious anthology of color reproductions, "Modern American Art." He has ruled out the abstractionists as "not American" —Marin, Weber, Walkowitz, Stuart Davis, and others who typify the "intellectual rift" of which Mr. Biddle speaks. He skims rather lightly in his choices over work that represents social protest. The American scene of the "Eight" was mainly urban; this is only touched upon, with one picture each by Sloan and Bellows. The principal figures are those whom Thomas Craven has discussed far and wide: Benton, Burchfield, Curry, Marsh, and Wood, who have come into notice within the last ten years and who, with the exception of Marsh, represent the rise of the Middle West in painting, with an emphasis upon the rural or provincial subject. Other work representing the same drift in New England and the South is broadly shown. Except for Sheeler's "City Interior" and one or two other pictures one wouldn't guess from this collection that the actual American scene is highly industrial. Mr. Boswell includes informal brief biographies of some seventy artists that give a great sense of vitality to the movement he portrays. By way of preface he has written a rapid sketch of American art history, and he shows some eighteen reproductions of American paintings from the past. His choice here seems somewhat cursory. Copley, for example, does not appear. Mr. Boswell obviously views the past only as a backdrop. With unmistakable enthusiasm he insists that American art has at last come of age through the work of a very contemporary, selected group, and still further that these artists have created "the only new development in the world of art," one which promises to be "the most important movement since the days of the Italian Renaissance."

Even a confirmed Middle Westerner may be abashed by these statements. We have at last the rise of the Middle West and of some other regional art, but does this make the occasion for hanging out so many large bright banners? At least the season brings this view well forward. In the preface to his sumptuous collection in color of world masterpieces Mr. Craven offers it again, declaring that his chosen five are "leaders in the most exciting and important art movement existing in a troubled world." It would be too much to say that the magnificent sequence of the "Treasury," beginning with Giotto and the great Italians and coming down through the greater stages of European art history, is only a prelude for the work of Benton, Burchfield, Curry, Marsh, and Wood; but they achieve a climactic final position in this volume, and they occupy one-third of the space devoted to American art. No other contemporary American painters except Sloan are included; and Mr. Craven's consideration of our earlier American art, like that of Mr. Boswell, seems casual. He has reproduced the exceedingly well-known Mrs. Seymour Fort by Copley, the perennial Washington by Gilbert Stuart, the much-reproduced "Snowy Heron" by Audubon, not a typical work nor one of the finest: indeed, the background of the Carolina rice plantation was almost surely painted by another hand.

Both Mr. Craven and Mr. Boswell buoyantly note the poor reception of the American exhibitions sent to Paris and London last summer. They believe our art was disparaged beacuse it differed from French or English art, and this they take to mean that our art is at last distinctively American. A good many sly remarks were made by the French and English critics, it is true, but their main view seems to have been that American art is still imitative, mainly imitative of French art, or else only weak and sprawling. The whole affair made a little episode which Mr. Jewell has perhaps taken too seriously in "Have We an American Art?" These remarks belong to the harmless back-talk always going on outside the realm of politics among the nationals of various countries: the French and the English have been at it for decades among themselves. We have always been a particularly easy target because of our habit of throwing our hats over the moon. Mr. Jewell is against hat-throwing. He disapproves of "the band-wagon movement of the American scene" or what in another place he calls with considerable severity "its inebriate debauch." He wants to see painters less occupied with the question whether their work is or is not American, more concerned with universal values. The true subject, he says, lies within.

This is wise counsel; but since outspoken controversy is the life of the arts, we wish that Mr. Jewell had named names, for this would have added both sparkle and clarity to the argument. In the same connection he might have named pictures, and still further he might have discussed the work of those artists who, as he feels, are achieving universal values. As for the question posed by Mr. Jewell's title, he answers it with a resounding yes, but when we eagerly turn the pages to learn what American art substantially is, we learn only that it is American because it is created in America by Americans.

Neither Mr. Jewell, Mr. Boswell, nor Mr. Craven has defined the character of American art, though each leads us to expect that he will do so. Each either diminishes or disregards the past. Mr. Boswell believes that we have "emerged from three centuries of European subservience" into the position of "a world power in art" because of "disillusionment with international entanglements during the World War." But surely disillusionment is a minor motive, and any art promising a firm development has deeper roots than can be established within twenty years. Perhaps the time is not yet ripe for defining native qualities; there is still plenty to be studied and restudied and much territory that is unknown or only partially known. If sequences or continuities

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have existed they may only gradually come to light. It is an evidence of vitality that two books have appeared in the midst of the contemporaneous approach which go at the question the other way around, well toward the beginning: "The Artist of the Revolution: The Early Life of Charles Willson Peale," by Charles Coleman Sellers, and "America's Old Masters," by James Thomas Flexner, who applies the phrase to West, Copley, Peale, and Stuart, thereby suggesting that in their rather long period we had an art that was our own.

To be sure, Mr. Flexner throws away the implications of his title at once, saying that he is concerned with the character of these artists, not with their art, which he leaves to the critics. Their lives were full of change, rich in episodes; so Mr. Flexner gets, in each case, a story; and he has a shrewd eye for effective detail, great competence in handling masses of material, and a spirited style. But what comes out of these biographies is not the character but the career, except in the case of Stuart, who is broadly and even brilliantly drawn. West never emerges as an individual from his vast mythologies and his friendship with George III. Copley is strangely seen as the embodiment of a single quality, timidity. Though Mr. Flexner warms toward Peale in the end, he describes this artist's odd restless acts so crisply and piles them up in such a heap that Peale becomes ridiculous. Mr. Flexner has obviously enjoyed his expeditions into the lives of these artists; it is therefore difficult to understand why he has blacked out or generalized their immediate backgrounds, why, for example, he speaks so frequently of "the wilderness," "the savages," "the Jehovah-haunted coast." Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, where these men lived for varying lengths of time in the second half of the eighteenth century, cannot be accurately described in such terms; the cities then exhibited a distinct worldliness and sophistication. Nor were West, Copley, Peale, and Stuart by any means "the first artists of the new world," as Mr. Flexner's subtitle has it. They were preceded by a very considerable number whose paintings are known; and Ralph Earl's beautiful, severe work belongs to the same period as theirs, with that of other lesser but interesting men.

In his book on Peale, a period study, not a full length biography, Mr. Sellers is not concerned with aesthetic criticism, but he has evoked Peale's work against the minutely circumstantial background of this artist's life in Maryland, in Philadelphia, and during the Revolution; and he has drawn the portrait with an intimate charm. The limber, irrepressible, generous character comes to life. We now need Peale at full length, and finally we should have the voluminous Peale diaries, which Mr. Sellers knows so well.

Probably some significance attaches to the fact that nearly all these books have used the approach of biography rather than of criticism, as by a common instinct to place artists and their work within that native scene which is now so much discussed. Mr. Craven is at his best in the informal notes, partly biographical, that accompany each picture in his monumental anthology. If we may quarrel with some of his choices of American painting, for the rest he has given us an inexhaustible collection, one which moreover may suggest certain broad commentaries upon American art: the pictures in his great sequence offer eternities in art; they provide touchstones. It may be salutary to compare Benton's "Persephone" with Cranach's "Nymph of the Spring," which Mr. Craven also reproduces. Mr. Boswell's whole panoramic collection may be played off against Mr. Craven's with significant results, not only as to the quality of individual American works but as to the elusive American element. There may be no final agreement about what is American, and we shall probably hear more from those who contend that such distinctions are futile, that art is not national. We may hope that further controversies may develop, with new panoramas of pictures, for the spilling out of conflicting ideas should mean a more general exploration of our diverse and burgeoning art and a larger, more widespread enjoyment of it.

Lobbies and Lawmakers

THE PRESSURE BOYS. By Kenneth G. Crawford. Julian Messner. $3.

PERHAPS the most striking accomplishment of the New Deal has been to pack the executive arm of the government with a minority of able and honest men. Not one of them would have previously had the opportunity or digestion to touch politics with a ten-foot pole. Yet they are not rich and righteous silk stockings who want nothing more than to disqualify Irish building contractors from wielding political power. They have made their peace with the dilemma of muckraking days: why do all the able young men want to work for our corporations and why don't any of them want to work for our government? The New Dealers by and large reflect the feeling of so many Americans that the only way to do anything about corruption is by a revolution whose corruption would be worse; as a matter of fact, many Americans are grateful right now for the opportunity of living under corruption by Congressional vote rather than corruption by dictatorial decree. To them the New Dealers' concentration on economic and social objectives rather than on corruption as such undoubtedly seems the better part of realism.

Coming as it does at the end of eight years of this effort of decent, intelligent people to live alongside their Congressmen, this book by Mr. Crawford, who writes for *The Nation* from Washington, is particularly important. For the New Dealers are the first to confess that their achievement to date is embodied more in memos and unfulfilled programs than in legislation and reemployment. This book about the corruptionists describes the people who have stalemated the New Deal. Indeed, nothing could make this book more timely than the recurrence of war—it licked Wilson's New Freedom—which has reunited the Democratic Party under the hegemony of the Southerners, who have only their votes to sell, and given political leadership to Pittman of the silver pork barrel, who has been demanding the scalps of the New Dealers. The names which recur again and again in Crawford's lurid tale of the lobbyists are Tydings, O'Connor, Cummings—the old line politicos who have been most effective in making the New Deal just a popular smoke screen for bigger and better favors.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Take, for instance, the case of former Attorney General Homer Cummings, author of the court-packing bill for which Tommy Corcoran has always been blamed. Crawford tells about Bruce Kremer, purged National Committeeman from Montana, whom you had to see if you wished to arrange matters with the Department of Justice. He relates how Kremer turned up as lawyer for Hopson's Associated Gas system, whose financial set-up is so fantastic that utility magnates talk like SEC commissioners about it; how one of Kremer's colleagues in the Associated affair was that well-known Washington lawyer Pat Hurley, Hoover's Secretary of War. He tells the story of that other Associated lawyer Basil O'Connor, whose brother, Rules Committee O'Connor, finally paid with his political head for his scandalous protection of Hopson. He goes into the story of Cummings's former first assistant and later law partner, William Stanley, who represented Columbia Gas and Oil while he was on the department's pay roll for $10,000 a year, which is tops for government. Nor does he omit mention of the still intriguing relations between Cummings, his Assistant Attorney General, Brien McMahon, and Cummings's old law client, a Connecticut industrialist of parts named Coster.

"The Pressure Boys" is worth reading if only for the way it takes the frock coat off the back of Millard Tydings, who invokes only the loftiest principles in fighting economic and social legislation. It seems that Tydings's entrepreneur activities were conducted in partnership with a lawyer named Levy, who was retained by liquor interests and the National Association of Retail Druggists. Thereupon, Tydings got busy with his famous price-fixing bill—government intervention in business on a scale no New Dealer ever envisioned—which, explains Crawford, he shoved through Congress as a rider on the District of Columbia's 1937 appropriation bill: Roosevelt could not veto the bill without depriving Washington of funds for its local government. Tydings, to protect the taxpayers, has fought government spending: on page 25 Crawford tells how Tydings lobbied the USHA to get $100,000 for a client of his who owned slum properties; on page 291, how even Dan Roper was scandalized by Tydings's lobbying for a ship-scrapping contract for another client; most incredible of all, on pages 290-91, how the WPA built a road to his estate for $7,000 —nearly a year's pay for a Senator—on the contract for which another law partner of his pocketed a commission, and how the government dug "a yacht basin in front of his Havre de Grace home—handy for his mother-in-law's yacht."

Then we have the sugar crowd, with its enormous Senatorial strength and its fantastic civil wars. And the shipping gang, where we meet up with Elisha Hanson, who likes to play Joan of Arc for free speech, some Hoover luminaries, and the rest of the crowd. It is too bad that Crawford finished his book before he could tell the story of how Bill Shearer came back to town in connection with cash-and-carry, and how the other ship lobbyists have been operating in the Senate—this is one reason the bill took so long to get through. At any rate, people who like the New Deal enough to vote for it again in spite of the fact that it doesn't get anything done can learn by reading this book about the motives of many who have put sand in the machinery. The publishers deserve to be hung for not indexing all the fascinating documentation in the volume.

ELIOT JANEWAY

Patroon Schuyler's Son-in-law

ALEXANDER HAMILTON. By David Loth. Carrick and Evans. $3.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON'S is the first of our great American success stories, and the tale of the "bastard brat of a Scots peddler" from St. Nevis in the Danish West Indies has been told many times. William Graham Sumner used it to illustrate the wickedness of government interference in business. Henry Cabot Lodge turned the story into a kind of Republican campaign document. Robert Warshow celebrated Hamilton as the greatest Secretary of the Treasury before Andrew Mellon. Vandenberg, the literary man from Michigan, called Hamilton "the Greatest American" and explained away his hero's contemptuous reference to "our real disease, which is democracy." It seems that Hamilton was "the great original American crusader" against "what the modern day would more accurately brand as bolshevism." Hamilton has been twice psychoanalyzed. Harry Elmer Barnes once traced Hamilton's "authority-loving" personality to the fact that he was practically fatherless, though the old gentleman did write home occasionally when he ran out of funds. Johan J. Smertenko, after running a hand over Hamilton's id, pronounced him "a susceptible neurotic" burdened with an inferiority complex due to his birth out of wedlock.

Loth's approach in this new biography is indicated by its subtitle, "Portrait of a Prodigy." Hamilton's early maturity and exceptional ability would have brought him success in any society. But while his low origin and penniless beginning would have been serious obstacles in the England he admired, they did not prove so in the States. Hamilton despised democracy and loved order, but it was only in the more equalitarian atmosphere of America and in a turbulent period of revolution and social reconstruction that he could have achieved so rapid a rise. At twenty he was aide-de-camp to Washington, at thirty-one a Founding Father, at thirty-three Secretary of the Treasury, Washington's one-man brain trust, drafter of the President's speeches, dominant figure of the Cabinet, hated "King of the Feds." Hamilton at thirty-eight was already an Elder Statesman, retired from the Treasury to a profitable law practice in New York. Loth tells the story well, and those who have not read it before will not be disappointed in his pages. He has an eye for color and a feeling for the dramatic. But he makes no contribution to our understanding of Hamilton, and he writes of the great political struggles of his time in a curiously a-political way. The details are there, but the fire is lacking. The "Report on Manufactures" becomes a kind of interlude amid assignations with Maria Reynolds, and the struggle between Hamilton and Jefferson, between the plutocratic and the democratic point of view, is too prettily refereed. Hamilton is declared right in mistrusting the "brain power" of the people; Jefferson,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in trusting to their "instinct." But the real job of the historian and biographer is not to weigh anti-equalitarian abstractions against equalitarian but to study their impact on immediate and practical issues. All men may not be created equal, but those who thought they were helped to create the equality in which they believed.

We have not yet had a revaluation of Hamilton in terms of contemporary doctrine and in the light of contemporary problems. Though this Gracchus-in-reverse has always been the hero of our upper classes, his broad view of the federal government's powers has become one of the mainstays of New Deal constitutional theory; thus the minority in the first AAA decision went back to Hamilton's conception of the "general welfare" clause to support government intervention in behalf of agriculture. For Hamilton was no believer in laissez faire. Under his leadership the merchant and the speculator seized boldly on the instruments of the new government and used them for their own purposes. Hamilton's rationalization was that a strong national government could only be established if it served the interests of those classes that wanted a strong national government. Loth, like past biographers, regards this circular reasoning as statesmanlike insight. But only Gustavus Myers, in his "History of the Supreme Court," has given us a glimpse of the clients and wealthy family connections which provide as good an explanation for Hamilton's actions as his theories. Hamilton, like Madison, was a "Marxist," for we sometimes forget that the view of society as a struggle of classes is far older than Marx. Yet we have no Marxist biography of Hamilton, no "economic interpretation" of the poor boy who married a Schuyler, of the eighteenth-century John W. Davis who came to conclusions on society that coincided with the interests of his clients.

I. F. STONE

The China War

CHAOS IN ASIA. By Hallett Abend. Ives Washburn. $3.

THE head of the China Bureau of the New York *Times*—Hallett Abend—has been widely criticized in recent years for his failure to bestir himself out of Shanghai into the interior of China where things have been really happening. Your reviewer confesses to have been one of the critics. But criticism gives way to sincere praise on reading what, as a journalistic achievement, must be set down as one of the best books written on the Far East since the outbreak of war.

It is not the book of a war correspondent. Mr. Abend's experiences with actual fighting were limited to Shanghai, where he was wounded in a misguided aerial bombing in the early weeks of the conflict. Yet it is a war book and an important one in that it shows, in an extraordinarily graphic way, the effects of the Japanese invasion on the occupied sections of China—and on Japan itself. Mr. Abend pulls no punches. He sets forth the full sordid story of Japanese looting and raping, of organized gambling, opium smoking, prostitution, and armed robbery under official Japanese protection. He tells of the Japanese plans to monopolize all business in the occupied areas, of their spying and terroristic activities, of the studied insolence of the Japanese soldiers to Chinese, and even foreign, civilians. No extensive trip to the interior is necessary to document this indictment of Japan's "New Order in Asia," which Mr. Abend calls "the New Disorder." Scores of illustrations are taken from the author's personal experience in Shanghai. The conduct of the Japanese sentries at the Garden Bridge at Shanghai provides a whole chapter of bitter anecdotes.

No writer has gone farther than Mr. Abend in picturing the weakness of Japan's position. He quotes the commander-in-chief of the Japanese armies in China as admitting that his troops are probably worse disciplined than are those of any other important nation in the world. He tells of the desperate economic situation in which Japan finds itself, of malnutrition at home, and of the weakness of the yen abroad. And he describes the efforts of the Japanese to escape the effects of the American and British boycotts of Japanese products. "Nearly every ship that leaves Kobe for Shanghai," he writes, "carries a heavy tonnage of Japanese silk. At Shanghai it is rebaled, labeled 'Made in China,' and reshipped to American or European ports."

The book's special merit is perhaps its lively readable style. Persons who know nothing of Chinese geography and less of Chinese personalities will probably find it the easiest reading of recent books on the East, while those who are familiar with the Orient will derive profit from its information and anecdotes. Apart from a somewhat annoying way of stressing the author's successes in prognostication, it has no conspicuous faults. It tells little about "Free China" or guerrilla warfare, but that has been admirably done by other writers.

MAXWELL S. STEWART

Artists of Science

SCIENCE TODAY AND TOMORROW. By Waldemar Kaempffert. The Viking Press. $2.50.

IN SCIENCE, by and large, there are two types of workers—artists and methodists. As in other fields, the artists are rare. And their work frequently lacks definite attachments to the world of reality and is sometimes extremely difficult to comprehend. This book is concerned with certain highly imaginative fields of investigation—so imaginative, in fact, that the book takes on the quality of a Jules Verne travel tale. Its author, as scientific editor of the New York *Times*, has had a unique opportunity to view all branches of science, and nobody can write better on a wide variety of subjects than he.

His description of researches into the chemical nature of stars and the physical properties of planets leaves the reader with a grasp of the immensity of the problems being attacked by astronomers, and explains the necessity for such a thing as the two-hundred-inch mirror, which has had more notice as a feat of glass-blowing than as a scientific instrument. For sheer unreality, the most thrilling chapter is the one on researches with rockets and rocket transportation. Many people know that a Professor Goddard has been experimenting with rockets with the hope of developing a method of leaving this planet; but I doubt if anybody except those directly interested appreciates how enormous are the problems involved. The designers of a rocket to be manned by human beings and dispatched outside the earth's atmosphere have

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to solve, among other problems, that of the lack of gravitational pull and the absence of oxygen. Only fools would undertake such research, say the pedestrians, as they sweep two little facts together to make a mole-hill; yet this seemingly fantastic endeavor has already made distinct contributions to the utilization of fuels.

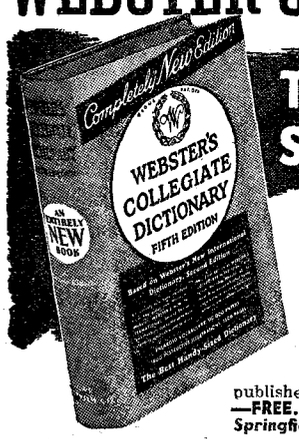
The wonders of present-day chemistry and the crucial problems facing biologists in connection with the nature of the gene are well handled. There is so much material packed between the covers of this book, however, that it would be futile to select some parts of it for praise. It is better to say that here is modern science in its more astounding phases. Because of the author's grasp of his subject and the simplicity of his style the book makes excellent reading.

HUGH H. DARBY

Recent Fiction

SUN AND STORM. By Unto Seppänen. Translated by Kenneth C. Kaufman. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

This new Finnish novel provides an interesting contrast with Sillanpaa's "Meek Heritage," which was written in 1919 but published in English translation only a year ago. In place of the grim, unrelieved tragedy of the earlier story, "Sun and Storm" traces the rise of a peasant clan through three generations, through the dark days of Russian oppression and the World War and the Bolshevist uprising, to peace and independence. Its picture of Finnish national pride and Russophobia may help to throw light on current negotiations in Moscow.

WEBSTER'S COLLEGIATE
NEW FIFTH EDITION


The Best Handy-Sized Dictionary
because it defines all the most commonly used words, selected from WEBSTER'S NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY, Second Edition — the "Supreme Authority" in courts, schools, and editorial offices — and is edited with the same careful scholarship. 110,000 entries; 1,800 illustrations; 1,800 pages; $3.50 to $8.50, depending on bindings. Purchase of your bookdealer, or order from publisher. Write for New Quiz and Picture Game —FREE. G. & C. MERRIAM CO., 326 Broadway, Springfield, Mass.

WEEK starting MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13
Extending thru Mat. & Eve. Performances of Sunday, November 19
HELEN HOWE in
"Washington—ALL CHANGE!"
A story of a liberal's efforts to bring off a Civil Liberties investigation, told in 11 amusing and penetrating monologue-satires
SEATS AT BOX OFFICE NOW—Prices 55c, 83c, $1.10 & $1.65
LABOR STAGE, 106 West 39th Street
Mail Orders Filled Now by Actor-Managers Inc., 22 East 55th Street.

Buy Your Books Through The Nation

THE NATION will deliver any book to your door at the regular publisher's price (postfree) providing payment is received with the order or publisher's price plus postage if sent C. O. D.

The Reader's Service Division
The Nation - 55 Fifth Avenue - New York

ARTILLERY OF TIME. By Chard Powers Smith. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.75.

With the leisurely thoroughness of a Trollope or a Dickens Mr. Smith draws a clear-cut, full-bodied portrait of a Yankee family in the 1850's and through the Civil War, a picture replete with both atmosphere and incident. In the two young Lathrop brothers, John and Ike, he embodies the two driving forces that made the war inevitable and helped to determine its outcome: the crusading idealism of the Abolitionists and the hard-headed practical enterprise of the Northern industrialists. Rich, sympathetic characterization, breadth of scope, and easy mastery of style raise "Artillery of Time" far above the rank and file of Civil War novels.

THE TORGUTS. By W. L. River. Frederick A. Stokes Company. $2.50.

In 1771 the Torguts, or Kalmucks, a Mongolian tribe about four hundred thousand strong, rose up against the oppression of Catherine the Great, left their adopted lands along the Volga, and set out in mass for their original homeland three thousand miles away. This dramatic migration, depicted a century ago by De Quincey in his "Flight of a Tatar Tribe," not only furnishes an amazing story of dogged perseverance but poignantly calls to mind the plight of uprooted groups today, who have made or are faced with the prospect of making a similar trek in search of liberty and a chance to live.

MRS. MORTON IN MEXICO. By Arthur Davison Ficke. Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.50.

A diadem of little tales about a charming Englishwoman, old in years but young in heart, who has adopted a remote Mexican village as a home. Served by a devoted cook and a house-boy and a half-witted gardener, she dispenses pesos and kindnesses to her simple neighbors, plays hostess at intervals to a fugitive general and a distinguished poet, and, shortly before her death, averts a tragedy by preventing a clash between drink-maddened peasants and federal soldiers who have closed the village church.

LIGHTWOOD. By Brainard Cheney. Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

Yankee land-agent shenanigans and skulduggery run afoul of squatters' rights in the piney woods of Georgia a few years after the Civil War. The crackers' quick-triggered resentment, together with a local lawyer's scheme for outwitting the land company, leads to arson and murder.

EGYPTIAN INTERLUDE. By Jolán Földes. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

Alexandria is the exotic setting for an international mélange by the author of "The Street of the Fishing Cat." A young Hungarian woman, separated from her husband, takes a job in the foreign colony, tries to find a niche for her restless, warm-hearted spirit in the tight little society made up of French, British, Americans, Italians, Germans, and representatives of some other nations that may be obsolete by the time this gets into print. Told in a leisurely fashion, with extensive use of flashbacks, the story aims as much at depict-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing the characteristics of the various nationalities as at unfolding Eve Martin's quest for a place where she can feel she really belongs. LOUIS B. SALOMON

Drama Note

ABOUT the theater this week the less said the better. "Pastoral" (Henry Miller's Theater) is about an impractical couple of the sort called "lovable" who raise much hell and no chickens on a farm near Kingston. It is vague of outline and uncertain of mood. As for "Summer Night" (St. James Theater), it is something which Vicki Baum conspired with Benjamin Glazer to concoct and concerns love in an amusement park. Despite elaborate staging it suggests nothing so much as one of the lesser radio serials. A well-disposed audience finally gave up and tittered during the big scene. JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

FILMS

"THAT THEY MAY LIVE," the French picture of the Filmarte Theater which cannot be played in France today, left cold this accidental survivor of the World War who promised himself in 1918 "no more war," though the hero of the film is just such an accidental survivor and its theme the unkept promise. It starts with an excellent sequence showing a patrol being sent out into no man's land at the Verdun front. Next day comes the armistice. The patrol is called back—all the members have been killed with the exception of one who volunteered to take the place of a father of four children. The story which follows is the story of this man, who promised his comrades that there would never be such a war again because the surviving soldiers would not allow the repetition of the slaughter. Released from a hospital, he returns to the village which his company had held for the time of the war, to work on devices which would make another war impossible. He invents a steel glass which no bullets can penetrate. The invention is stolen from him and promptly utilized by the armament industry, and of course the enemy invents a new bullet powerful enough to pierce it. Years pass—twenty years—the ex-soldier is haunted by his conscience and by his incapacity to stop a world moving toward a new war. Reading the headlines which precede the outbreak of the present war, he does not know in what period he is living—1914 or 1939. He returns to the graves of his World War comrades and calls on them to rise and march against the soldiers who are marching into the new war. The dead respond to his appeal, and a ghastly army of war cripples frightens the countryside. The crazy inventor who has called them out of their graves is burned to death at the stake. In the end he marches with his former comrades.

Abel Glance, who wrote and directed this story—in its conception it had the merit of imagination and humane conviction—has made it into a film which conveys merely his own confused, well-meaning, and impotent pacifism, which

HOW WAR CAME

By

Raymond Gram Swing

America's ace radio news analyst here presents his interpretation of the events that led to war and the meaning behind them. You will find it not only an exciting narrative, but will turn to it again and again for light on new problems that arise. Only through full comprehension of the steps that led to the present catastrophe is it possible to understand the trend of world affairs.

JOHN GUNTHER says: "It's exactly what we need. A wonderfully acute and dispassionate examination. Mr. Swing reads even better than he sounds which is as high a compliment as I can think of." "No one in these critical weeks has interpreted our world with more consistent moderation, balance and insight. *How War Came* reads like drama."—*LEWIS GANNETT, N. Y. Herald Tribune.*

$2.00

By the Author of

PHILOSOPHER'S HOLIDAY

ARTS AND THE MAN

A Short Introduction to Aesthetics

By

Irwin Edman

"A book on aesthetics," writes Professor Edman, "is justified not so much by leading the reader to further books on aesthetics, but rather by returning him to the arts, a return marked by sharpened and deepened appreciation." *Arts and the Man* affords the reader this opportunity. It first describes the general relations of art to the whole of our experience, next the origins and functions of the artistic process, then the specific ways in which the arts, through their special media, clarify, vivify and unify our lives. In the concluding chapter, Professor Edman discusses the relation of art to philosophy, throwing new light on the significance of major art and on the imaginative meaning of major philosophies.

$1.75

"BOOKS THAT LIVE"

W. W. NORTON & COMPANY

70 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he expressed in a little manifesto written on the eve of the present war. There he said:

> I dedicate this film to those who will die in the war of tomorrow. I am sure that they also will view it skeptically, and they will fail to recognize themselves in it. I have made this film because the shadow of war, already dominantly intrenched in the minds of men, is seeping into the world's greatest hearts, while death silently prepares its dreadful counterpart. I accuse the war of yesterday of paving the way for the Europe of today. I accuse the negligent, the unseeing, the selfish, and the grasping of having permitted Europe to split up into rival factions when the blood that had been spilled should have served to cement an indissoluble European alliance. In the picture and words of this film I have attempted to capture an instant of the dizzy rush of the men of today toward war.

The picture is even worse than this manifesto. Instead of telling simply the tragic story of an ex-soldier who could not forget, it merely illustrates the manifesto of the producer without making it any more sensible. A great actor, Victor Francen, is forced to play a part made up of fine phrases and hypocritical feeling. Even his acting cannot always overcome the handicaps. The style of the picture is a mixture of pseudo-realism and pseudo-fantasy, producing an effect of falseness.

"Intermezzo" (Selznick) is a picture I would not have liked to miss. There is, besides Leslie Howard, whom we have not seen for long in such an excellent performance, a new actress—Ingrid Bergman—who beats all the newcomers of many a year. She is unspoiled and natural, wins one's heart in the first moment, and knows how to act without showing it. She can be really gay and really sad and has a way of making the transition from one mood to the other which tells an unspoken story. The picture itself is an outmode and stupid triange affair, with the added punishment of a moral dialogue. When the deep question was asked on the screen, "I wonder whether happiness has ever been based on the unhappiness of others," a lady in my vicinity said loudly, "Plenty"; and the false morality of the whole exploded all around me into laughter.

FRANZ HOELLERING

RECORDS

IT IS my impression that Schnabel's recordings of the thirty-two sonatas, the five concertos, the Diabelli Variations of Beethoven, and certain works of Schubert and Mozart represent H. M. V.'s intention to do a fairly complete job with Schnabel's performances of these composers' music. The project may not be completed; my impression may not be correct; but if the impression is correct, then the project is the only instance of the phonograph being used in the way it should be with outstanding interpreters. Recordings have been made of some of Toscanini's performances; but I know of no plan to preserve for the future his performances of all the great works of Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Haydn, and the rest, or even all that he prepares for his broadcasts; and rare opportunities to record his performances of Verdi's Requiem and Beethoven's Missa Solemnis have been allowed to pass. And far from having the superlative Budapest Quartet record the quartet literature, H. M. V. has used this group less than it has the inferior Pro Arte and Busch Quartets, and has assigned to them its most important tasks—the several volumes of Haydn quartets, the Mozart viola quintets, the Schubert 'cello quintet to the Pro Arte, the last Beethoven quartets to the Busch. A year ago, after the Budapest's Beethoven series at the Y. M. H. A., I suggested that Victor record these performances. I was aware of a record company's unwillingness to duplicate; and I would not have expected anything less than the artistic magnitude of the Budapest performances—less, that is, in sales possibilities—to induce Victor to duplicate its Beethoven recordings. But I was wrong: Victor is duplicating all the Beethoven quartets, and not with the Budapest but with the Coolidge Quartet. This gives Columbia an opportunity; and meanwhile the Budapest Beethoven series is being repeated at the Y. M. H. A. on November 8, 15, 22, 29, and December 2, and should not be missed.

The Coolidge Quartet offers Beethoven's Opus 18, No. 1, played with fine technical finish and great musical understanding (M-550, $5). Handel's Organ Concerto Opus 7, No. 4 (M-587, $4.50) begins and ends impressively, but is not, as a whole, one of the composer's most impressive works. It is well played by E. Power Biggs and Arthur Fiedler's Sinfonietta; and the fine sound of the Baroque Organ of the Germanic Museum is recorded with admirable fidelity. Mozart's Flute Concerto K. 314 (M-589, $3.50) is one of the least consequential of all the pieces of hackwork that he turned out, but provides the occasion for beautiful flute-playing by Marcel Moyse. And on a single record (1998, $1.50) is Stokowski's latest monstrosity, an orchestral version of Chopin's Prelude Opus 28, No. 24, with a quiet performance of Stravinsky's acidulous "Pastorale" on the reverse side.

The Trapp Family Choir's album, Folk Songs of Central Europe (M-586, $7.50), offers music which is artless and charming in small quantities at a time, and which is beautifully sung in an excessively miniature style. On a single record (2007, $1.50) Melchior sings Grieg's "Swan" with characteristically sensitive phrasing and delivers two inconsequential songs of encore type by Sverre Jordan in brilliant encore style. Another song of the same type is Frank Bridge's "Love Went a-Riding," which Flagstad brackets with an overphrased version of "Songs My Mother Taught Me" (2009, $1.50).

Moderately enjoyable, among recent jazz records, are the Bud Freeman "China Boy" and "The Eel" (Bluebird 10386); the Muggsy Spanier "That Da Da Strain"—but not Muggsy's solo in "Some Day, Sweetheart" on the reverse side (Bluebird 10384); the Bob Zurke streamlined version of "Honkey Tonk Train Blues" (Victor 26342); Zurke's playing in "I've Found a New Baby" and "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea" (Victor 26355); Maxine Sullivan's "Turtle Dove"—but not "Ill Wind" on the reverse side (Victor 26344). And Alec Templeton's "Man with New Radio" (Victor 26348) is funnier than his "And the Angels Sing" (26353); but his piano solos on the reverse sides are not even funny.

B. H. HAGGIN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Letters to the Editors

Seward Collins as Bondsman

Dear Sirs: In your editorial of October 28, The Colonel House Hoax, you recorded that it was a telegram from me which informed the wrangling Representatives that the document signed "Colonel House," which had precipitated a quarrel when placed in the *Record,* was in reality Dr. William J. Maloney's brilliant 1919 skit on British propaganda, to which Colonel House's name had recently and very stupidly been forged. In mentioning my part your editorial writer described me as having been "on at least one occasion bondsman for the Bundsmen." In the interest of accuracy let me say that I have on no occasion furnished bail for a member of the German-American Bund, nor for that matter had any other connection with the Bund people.

The nearest I came to doing so was when I furnished bail for Mrs. Ignatz Griebl, in circumstances that could not but have been approved by most *Nation* readers. Her husband, Dr. Griebl, who had been connected with the Bund's predecessor, the Friends of New Germany, last year skipped to Germany when being questioned in the so-called "Nazi spy case." Soon after Dr. Griebl's disappearance, Mrs. Griebl was arrested as a "material witness," but the real reason for her arrest was made plain by the arraigning judge, who told her that her troubles would all be over if she would just get in touch with Dr. Griebl and have him come back to this country (newspapers of June 10, 1938). Whereupon I furnished bail for her and issued a protest against this "hostage" kind of arrest. Incidentally, my protest was later proved fully justified when Mrs. Griebl was released before the "spy trial" and allowed to join her husband in Germany.

My main reason for writing you is to point out that this episode had absolutely no connection with my part in exposing "the Colonel House Hoax." It was purely gratuitous to drag in, inaccurately, an action arising from my interest in justice to Nazis among others, when recounting an action arising from my special knowledge of British propaganda and counter-propaganda.

SEWARD COLLINS

New York, October 29

[We owe Mr. Collins an apology. We must admit that we were imprecise about his activities as a bondsman. We had in mind not only Mrs. Griebl but Allen Zoll, for whom Mr. Collins put up $3,000 bail when the leader of American Patriots, Inc., was accused of trying to extort $7,500 from Donald Flamm of WMCA last July. We admit that one wife of a proto-Bundist plus one American Patriot, Inc., does not equal one Bundist, but the extent of the difference seems in the realm of calculus rather than arithmetic. In justice to Mr. Collins, who describes himself as a rightist but does not object to being called a fascist, it should be added that after putting up bail for Zoll he wrote a letter to the press in which he said: "There is no 'free speech' issue here; Mr. Flamm was fully justified in discontinuing Father Coughlin's addresses after the serious inaccuracies concerning Jews which Father Coughlin made—not only made but repeated after he had been corrected." It is also interesting to recall that Mr. Collins was once a bondsman on the other side of the political fence, and bailed John Dos Passos, Dorothy Parker, and Mike Gold out of jail during the Sacco-Vanzetti case.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

Murphy in Word and Deed

Dear Sirs: Attorney General Frank Murphy is making bold efforts these days to convince the American people that he is on the trail of any and everyone who is a menace to democracy. He assures us that his department will crack down on anyone who violates the constitutional guaranties of civil liberty.

Can Mr. Murphy think of a single civil right more fundamental than that of "a fair and impartial trial by jury"? Yet what is he doing about the gross injustice done to John Longo, who was convicted in New Jersey by a "planted jury" of the political offense of attempting to file nominating petitions said to contain a few faulty signatures against the Hague Democratic machine?

It is a known fact that agents of the Department of Justice spent several weeks in Jersey City diligently investigating the Longo case. Even a cursory probe should have revealed rank fraud in the jury that sent this man to prison for nine months because he dared to oppose the corrupt Jersey Tammany.

Until Mr. Murphy actually uses his powers to prosecute ruthless political tyrants in his own party who are undermining American democracy, without being forced to do so by evidence dumped in his lap by such Republican officials as District Attorney Thomas E. Dewey, we must keep our tongues in our cheeks when he makes his high-sounding protestations about preserving civil rights and upholding the Constitution.

LIVINGSTON SCHUYLER

Jersey City, October 23

Appeal for Facts

Dear Sirs: In the September 30 issue of *The Nation* the editors make two statements which seem to represent a growing weakness in their crusade against fascism. The first ends a paragraph commenting upon the letters to Congress by organized minorities. It reads: "It is still a war against fascism, despite Mr. Chamberlain."

Of course, the editor who wrote that meant that in his or her judgment the war is against fascism. But one does not read magazines like *The Nation* merely to learn the opinions of its editors. In the past at any rate we looked for factual and theoretical reasons for the holding of opinions. The present war, for example, may or may not be a war against fascism. Dogmatic statements either way do not help to clarify the issues, and complexities are never resolved by merely ignoring them.

The second statement is found in the answer of the editors to Mr. Farrell's letter. It reads: "We agreed with Stalin as long as he agreed with us." If this was written seriously and not in a spirit of mere bravado, the sentence should read, "We agreed with Stalin as long as we thought he agreed with us." Such articles as Krivitsky's in the *Saturday Evening Post,* as well as countless other sources of information, might have made you a trifle more skeptical about the policies of Stalin. Under the circumstances is it not possible that *The Nation* was a bit superficial in its eagerness to accept appearances for reality where

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Stalin was concerned, and may not the same superficiality mislead it into too simple an explanation of what the present war is about or likely to accomplish?

EVAN W. THOMAS

New York, October 23

On California Side Roads

Dear Sirs: Travel in California is pleasant—if you stick to the main roads. We discovered that after a 3,500-mile tour of the state. Up and down the Sacramento, Salinas, and San Joaquin valleys we saw unending acres of wheat, vegetables, and fruits—a richness which seemed to put the rest of the country on a different level of agricultural development.

But in California, unlike Ohio or Indiana, there are hardly any farmhouses adjoining the fields and orchards. We found, instead, signs which read, "Sugar Beet Grown Here for Spreckles," "Union Sugar Grown Here," "Headquarters of Salinas Land Company," "Kern County Land Company," "Ferry Morse Seed Company," and "Eckhard Seed Company." In Kings City we asked who owned the surrounding land and were told, "W. R. Hearst owns 500,000 acres."

Then we went off the main roads, to Arvin and Weed Patch and around Bakersfield, Tulare, and Visalia. Grapes had just been gathered and the cotton was ready to be picked. We found a few small farms and began to hear fighting words from their beleaguered owners. They were bucking the Associated Farmers, composed of big landholders like Di Giorgio, Merritt, Hoover, the Fricks, the Bank of America, and the utility corporations. These dirt farmers were battling for their land, for water, and for a supply of pure cotton seed, which they declared were being grabbed by the big monopolies.

Then we saw what the whole state of California is up in arms about. We were in the "Grapes of Wrath" country, and we saw the migratory slums—the ragged tents of the Hoovervilles outside Bakersfield, the rotton encampments opposite the rich Jewitt lands near Arvin.

At Arvin and Farmersville the government has established permanent camps for the migratory workers which are a partial answer to the problem caused by low wages and unsanitary living conditions. But everyone was even more interested in the Mineral King Cooperative Farm near Visalia, where thirteen families—farmers who lost their land in Texas and Oklahoma—were working a 530-acre farm collectively, with the aid of limited government financing.

We went to a barn dance at one of the government camps and hung around a few days listening to what these farmers from every state in the Union talked about. Mr. Merritt of Tagus told us the reason he didn't have plumbing installed in his houses, as has been done in the government camps, was because his workers were too uneducated. But there was nothing ignorant about the people we talked to. They argued about the Ham and Eggs scheme, about banking control of credit, unions, war, and their own predicament. One young Arkansas worker drawled cynically, "If they sent us 'mi-groh-tory workers,' as they call us, back to where we come from—watch an' see how fast they'd come runnin' for us."

LILLIAN ROSOVSKY,
HELEN ROSOVSKY,
MEL FISKE,
GEORGE WHITMAN,
JOE WERSHBA.

En Route to San Antonio, September 21

[*This is the last of a series of letters from the "five collegians in search of America."*]

The "Poor Devils" Again

Dear Sirs: McAlister Coleman's letter in your issue of October 21, entitled Don't Cheer, Boys, is an excellent example of the kind of tolerance so badly needed in these troubled times. His forbearance toward the Communist Party is all the more praiseworthy when compared with the recent attitude of the party toward Mr. Coleman and his political associates. You will recall that when the Socialist Party, in consequence of its absorption of the Trotskyite group, dropped in membership some 70 per cent during a few short months, the Communists rudely and persistently shouted, "We told you so!"

I have, of course, heard it suggested that Mr. Coleman's forbearance is motivated not so much by Christian charity as by the suspicion that perhaps the C. P. is not so dead as he could wish, but, like the crocodile, is merely imitating a dead log in order to entrap the unwary swimmer in troubled political waters. It seems to me, however, that such insinuations can only be made by those who, being completely devoid of political morality themselves, are unable to appreciate its presence in other persons.

While praising his attitude, I should like to offer Mr. Coleman a word of warning. A consideration of the numerous occasions during the past twenty years when the Communist Party has died, been solemnly buried, and then been miraculously resurrected partially explains Earl Browder's well-known *sangfroid*. Beware, Mr. Coleman; be magnanimous to the Communists if you will, but take care that they do not suddenly rise from their ashes and deal you a good, resounding smack!

ROBERT CLAIBORNE, JR.

Santurce, Puerto Rico, October 15

CONTRIBUTORS

TONI CHRISTEN is the pseudonym of a German writer who has just arrived from Berlin.

HAROLD J. LASKI, professor of political science at the London School of Economics, is a leading member of the left wing of the British Labor Party.

MAX LERNER is professor of political science at Williams College. He has recently published "It Is Later Than You Think" and will soon bring out "Ideas Are Weapons," which will contain the article completed in this issue of *The Nation.*

CONSTANCE ROURKE contributed an essay on the artist Voltaire Coombe to a recent issue of *The Nation.* She is the author of a number of books dealing with American social and cultural history, including "Audubon," "American Humor," and "Charles Sheeler, Artist."

ELIOT JANEWAY is a frequent contributor to *Asia, Harper's,* and *The Nation.*

HUGH H. DARBY is an associate in the Department of Biological Chemistry at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University.

LOUIS B. SALOMON a member of the English Department of Brooklyn College, reviews fiction regularly for *The Nation.*

INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS

THE NATION, 55 Fifth Ave., New York. Price 15 cents a copy. By subscription—Domestic: One year $5; Two years $8; Three years $11. Additional Postage per year: Foreign, $1; Canadian, 50 cents. The Nation is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Dramatic Index, Index to Labor Periodicals, Public Affairs Information Service. Two weeks' notice and the old address as well as the new are required for change of address.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED